The Fog Bowl

The Last Utopians

Sir John A.'s Lost Weekend

The Beaver

CANADA'S HISTORY MAGAZINE

October | November 2007

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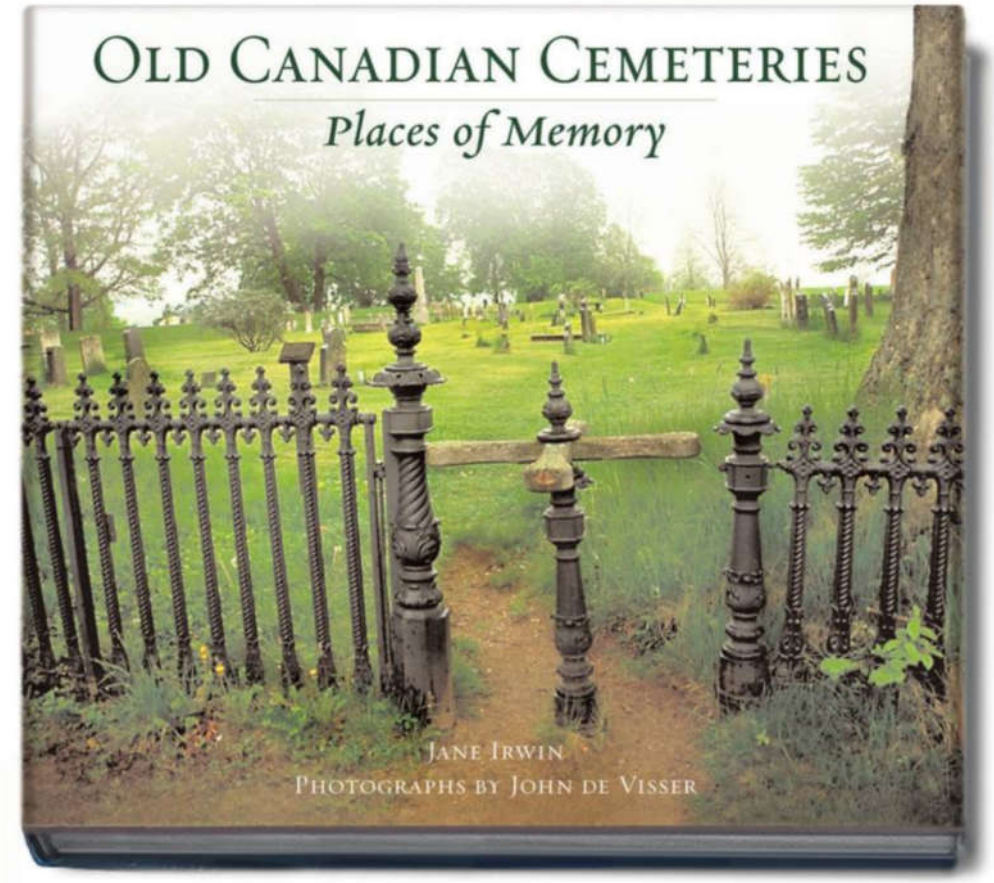

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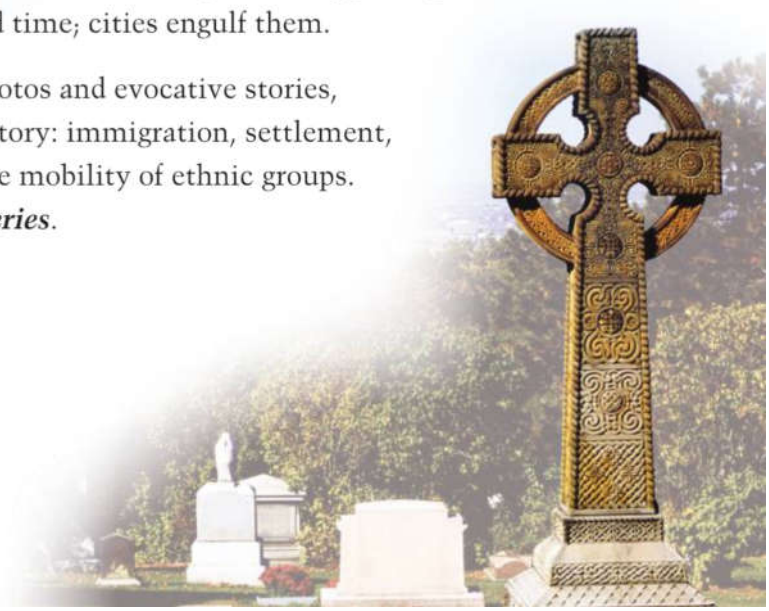

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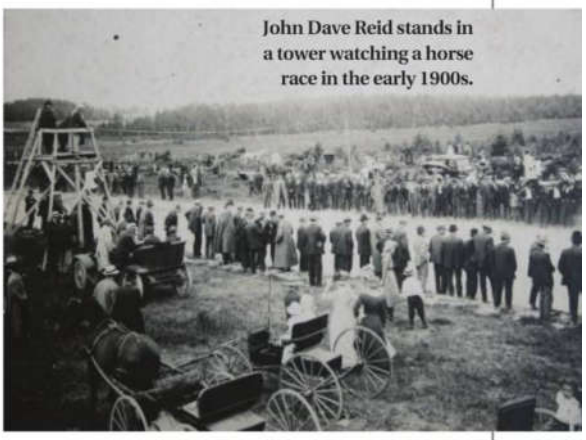
Canada

Picture-perfect memories

According to family lore, my great uncle, John Dave Reid, often whittled at public gatherings. If conversation lulled, John Dave would abruptly declare he was tired of carving, and, with a great thunk, jab his whittling knife deep into his pant leg. I imagine my great uncle — who had a wooden leg — enjoyed a chuckle at strangers' expense as they stared, jaws agape, at the sight of a 300-pound man with a blade jutting out of his leg.

I bring up John Dave because he's a key fixture in one of my favourite Reid family photographs.



John Dave Reid stands in a tower watching a horse race in the early 1900s.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY MARK REID

Much of my childhood was spent exploring an overgrown circular path through the forest behind our home in Nova Scotia. Rutted by tractor tires, hemmed in by alders, we called it the Racetrack, although at the time I didn't know why.

During a recent visit home, my parents showed me a photo that was a revelation. Taken in the early 1900s, it depicts a crowd of men and women lining a racetrack, surrounded by horses and wagons and the odd horseless carriage. Off to one side, the blur of a thoroughbred sweeps past the throng. In the centre of the photo — if you look closely — there's a group of men sharing a liquor bottle. And up in a tower, overlooking the scene, is a bear of a man watching the race.

To my knowledge, it's the only photo of my great uncle John Dave.

Seeing that photograph made real my father's tales of John Dave, forever changed my perception of the Racetrack, and hit home the fact that I'm merely the latest chapter in an ongoing family story that began generations ago and continues with my children.

For me, the greatest photos are those that tell a story or enhance a memory. Perhaps that's why I'm so fond of the Album section of *The Beaver*.

There's an intimacy to Album photos that make them unique in the magazine. These photos, at their heart, are invitations to us from contributors to share their most cherished memories and moments.

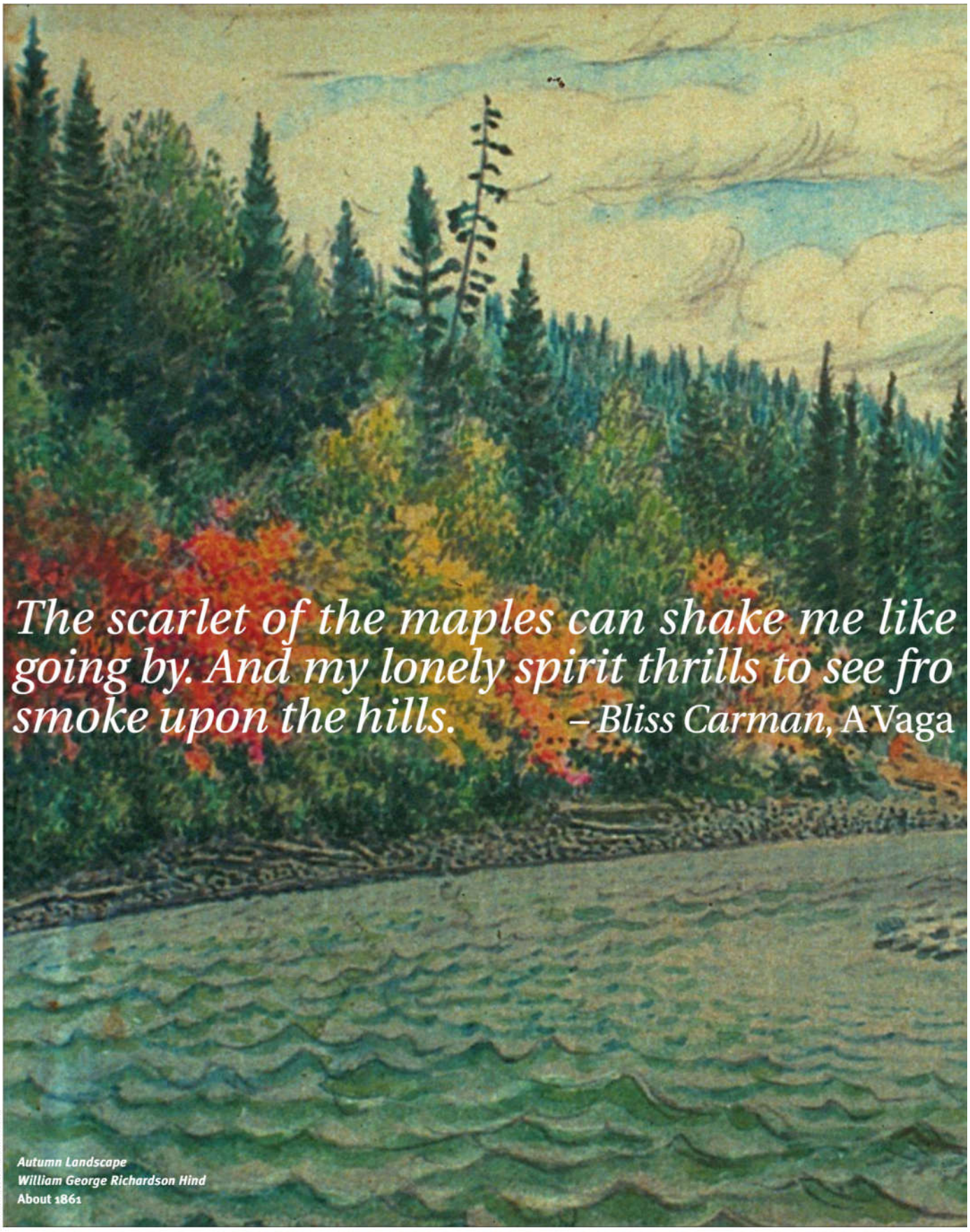
This issue's Album photo is particularly special. The image, from the 1930s, is of a radiant Isabelle Sargeant proudly wearing her family's ancestral wedding dress. Isabelle's image was sent to us last year, but, due to a backlog of photos, is only now seeing publication. Unfortunately, Isabelle passed away last January in her ninety-fifth year, without ever seeing her photo published in the magazine.

In our family albums, or in the pages of *The Beaver*, photographs hold an emotional power that is made real only by sharing them with others.

We look forward to sharing more of your favourite moments in issues to come.

Mark Reid
Editor
editors@historysociety.ca

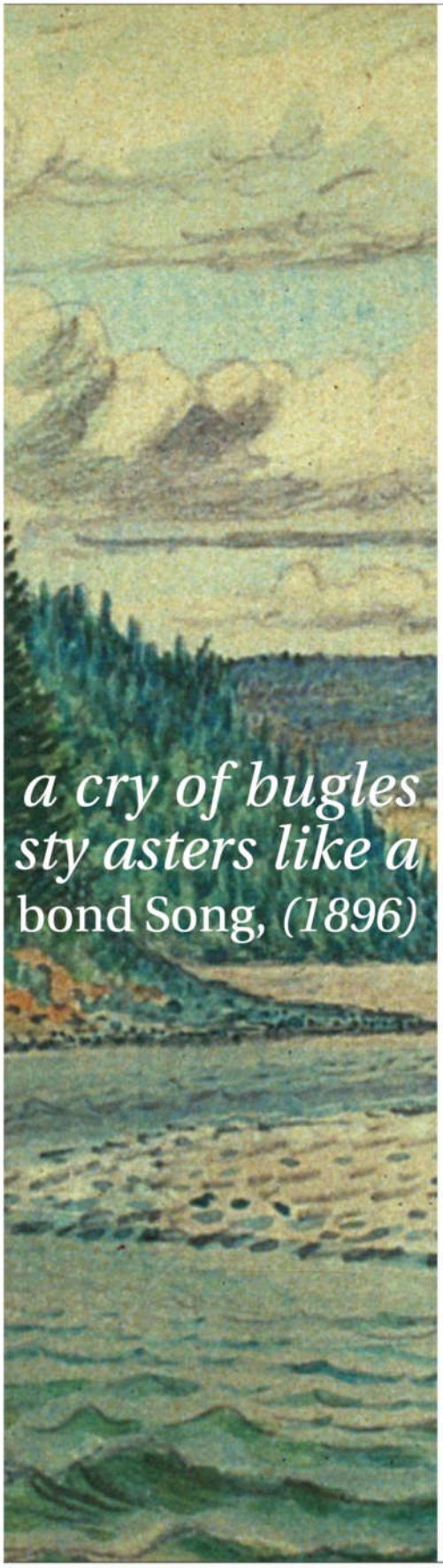
COVER: MCCORD MUSEUM/MP-0000.107/DEFENDERS OF ECCLES HILL FENIAN RAID, NEAR FRANKLIN, VERMONT, ABOUT 1870.



The scarlet of the maples can shake me like going by. And my lonely spirit thrills to see fro smoke upon the hills. – *Bliss Carman,* A Vaga

Autumn Landscape
William George Richardson Hind
About 1861

MCCORD MUSEUM / DETAIL M11439



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Letters

The Beaver
CANADA'S HISTORY MAGAZINE
THE WORST CANADIAN?
Controversial. Contentious. But the most contemptible? See inside for a special 12-page feature.
Duncan Campbell Scott
Edward Farrer

Worst Canadians article sensationalist

Who is the worst Canadian? This month, the worst Canadian is not a person, dead or alive. The worst Canadian is a magazine called *The Beaver*. Why? Simply for taking ten names from some sort of unscientific popularity contest and slapping each of them with a "Worst Canadian" label ["The Worst Canadians," August/ September 2007]. Three of the four prime ministers in that list won a total of nine elections as party leader, not counting being elected as MPs. That's a popularity contest that can't be denied. The fourth one hasn't finished making his mark in history, so any judgment about him is premature. Another listee gave up his citizenship, so who cares about him? The killers in that list should not to be given another minute of glory, even in a society that remembers their acts. Opinions may vary about a doctor just trying to get a lethargic society at par with the rest of the world, but just because his opponents are more vocal than the silent majority, the "Worst Canadian" does not carry much weight. And how on earth did Celine get in this list? Maybe she didn't do much in Canada during the last few years, I agree, but she certainly has not taken anything from us either. And who's Chris Hannah? *Beaver*, get back to what made you what you are: interesting articles about the facts of Canada and Canadians in times past. Your readers are bright enough to make up their own opinion. Leave the polls, rankings and sensationalism to other media outlets.

DAN DIONNE
OTTAWA, ONTARIO

Defending Pierre Trudeau

I lived the time, I lived the terror and I lived in Montreal where it (the FLQ crisis) was all happening. Decisions needed to be made. We feared for the lives of our loved ones when the FLQ blocked the bridges, threatened the armories, blew up mailboxes and killed and maimed innocent people. It took a man, a French man, a man who had courage, strength and wisdom… to do what was right, and what was needed, to protect our country and its citizens…. Trudeau was and is the best prime minister of the past century and took a stand where it needed to be taken. Trudeau was a hero… he is responsible for Canada still being together — not as a union or republic, but as a country and a nation.

DOUGLAS G. POTTER
VIA E-MAIL

Pierre Trudeau as the worst Canadian in history? You're kidding me, right? Web polls are always difficult to manage, especially when you've got people with a barrow to push. I understand someone's view of Trudeau's place in our history is dependent upon where you live in the country, but to say he's the worst Canadian suggests that your poll was hijacked by people trying to make a political point.

JACK CEMBALISTY
NORTH VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Beaver's response elitist

It is fitting, very Canadian, for *The Beaver* to have an elite standing by to correct the peasants, should they choose an inconvenient goat as the Worst Canadian. For many years now, I've thought Trudeau was the worst thing that ever happened to Canada. The rest of the list, well, I'm 50-50 with it. It appears to me that the list compiled by the "history panel" is not "more considered and measured," but is what one would expect from a group of Canadian academics: obsession with matters of race and ethnicity (Farrer, Arcand, Trutch, Scott) and a bash at "The Establishment." Sir John A.? A truly inspired choice — who needs Confederation anyway? Six majority governments? Phhttt.... "Restraint of the discipline?" Oh please, they're about as restrained as a pit bull, going after the usual suspects. I would have voted more or less with my fellow peasants, and I congratulate them for their choice of the abstractist Trudeau.

DON CARR
BRANTFORD, ONTARIO

No bad Canadians

I very much enjoyed the August/September 2007 issue… I refrained from participating in your "Worst Canadians" survey because I didn't think it would be polite for a United States citizen to do so. Also, I had a hard time thinking of any truly "bad" Canadians. Your bottom ten and your Hall of Infamy are a pretty tame lot compared with the variety of villains spawned throughout the history of my own country. As an outside observer, the choice of Pierre Trudeau came as a surprise. Remembering the U.S. presidents who served while he was prime minister — Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan — there are many in my country that would have gladly traded any of them for your "worst Canadian."

KEVIN BOATRIGHT
LAWRENCE, KANSAS
UNITED STATES

All in the family

I'd like to thank you for nominating my ancestor (for whom my father, grandfather and I are named) for the worst Canadian. I was in the gym at RMC (Royal Military College in Kingston, Ontario) today when the Head of Athletics asked me why my name was on a list of the "Worst Canadians." Given that "John Reiffenstein," a fairly uncommon name, seems to be identified in most of the (media) accounts… that picked up *The Beaver*'s story as simply a "military leader," I won't be surprised to hear more inquiries along these lines… I've no doubt I'll still be pulling this out as an amusing anecdote years from now. My father always maintained that old Ensign Reiffenstein got a raw deal… but barring me (or my brother, who's the academic in the family) doing any further research on the matter, I'll defer to your judgment as to his poor reputation. I had always seen him as a fairly obscure figure — I'd have thought there had to be one or two senior officers… who were worse than John Reiffenstein. Ultimately, leaving aside the mass murderers, etc., on the list, my ancestor's actually in some good company as far as the public picks are concerned.

JOHN CHRISTOPHER REIFFENSTEIN, MAJOR
CANADIAN LAND FORCE COMMAND AND
STAFF COLLEGE, VIA E-MAIL

The nicest Canadian

I could almost hear the gasp of incredulity from the question plastered across the cover of your August/September 2007 issue ["The Worst Canadian?"]. But the lead article in that issue ["Meteoric Image"] is literally as remote as you can get from miscreant groundlings, and so creates an interesting juxtaposition with the cover story. It recounts, in fair detail, the early days of the space race and the great good fortune of an enterprising Canadian scientist to snap the first photograph of Sputnik. Readers learn that Art and Evelyn Griffin made a very special couple that adapted to the hardships of a harsh and isolated existence while setting up an observatory for meteor research in northern Alberta. Both grew up in large families and learned early in life how to make do and how to get on with neighbours. Art & Ev made legions of friends wherever they lived in Ontario, Alberta, and Vancouver. As a classmate at the University of Toronto in 1950, Art played a critical role in getting me a summer job at the David Dunlap Observatory that led eventually to my own astronomical career. Sadly, Evelyn passed away a few years ago and cannot share in this moment of well-deserved recognition for Art's achievement. Should you ever hold a competition for the nicest Canadian, I know whom I would nominate!

VICTOR GAIZAUSKAS
OTTAWA, ONTARIO

Flying Solo

We enjoy reading articles in *The Beaver* and often encounter items that resonate with us. Such was the case with Dalene Flannigan's story ["When Beeton Was Buzzing," August/September 2007]. The statement ("…Charles Lindbergh had made the world's first non-stop transatlantic flight;…") seems to have been influenced by the American media's penchant for history revisionism.

(John) Alcock and (Arthur) Brown were the first to succeed in a non-stop transatlantic flight in 1919. Lindbergh's famous flight was not made until eight years later and had been preceded by many other flights across the Atlantic, although none had been made solo.

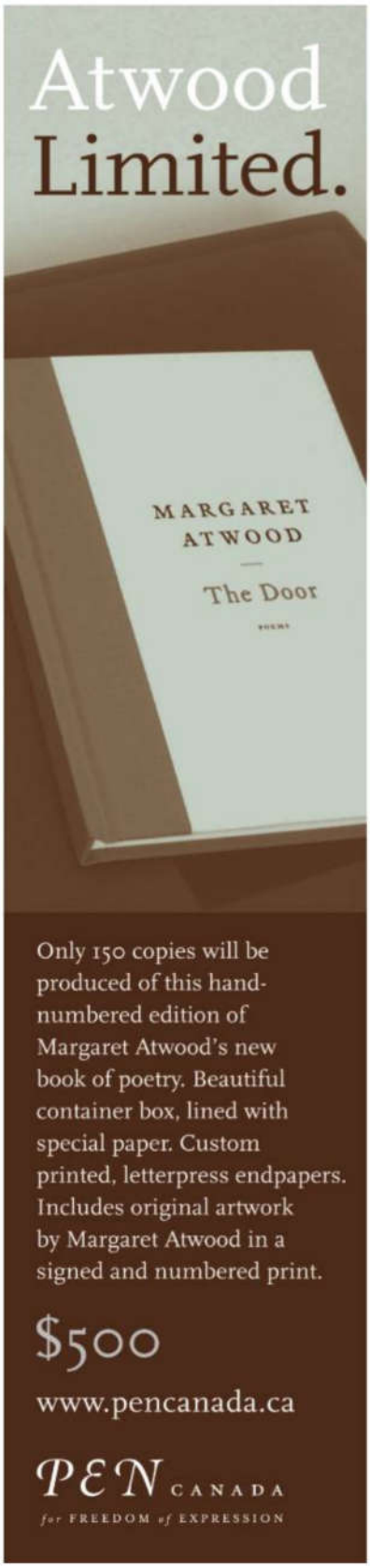
GEORGE AND KATHY FORSTER
COCHRANE, ALBERTA

[*Ed:* The Beaver *received similar letters from other alert readers, who pointed out that Lindbergh was the first to make a solo transatlantic flight. We apologize for what was an editing mistake and NOT the fault of the writer.*]

ERRATUM

The effort to eliminate erucic acid from Canola was driven largely by health concerns, and not to eliminate the acid's bitter taste, as was inferred in an August/ September 2007 Currents item.

***The Beaver* welcomes readers' comments.** E-mail us at editors@historysociety.ca or write to *The Beaver*, 478–167 Lombard Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 0T6 Canada. Please include your address and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for clarity or length.



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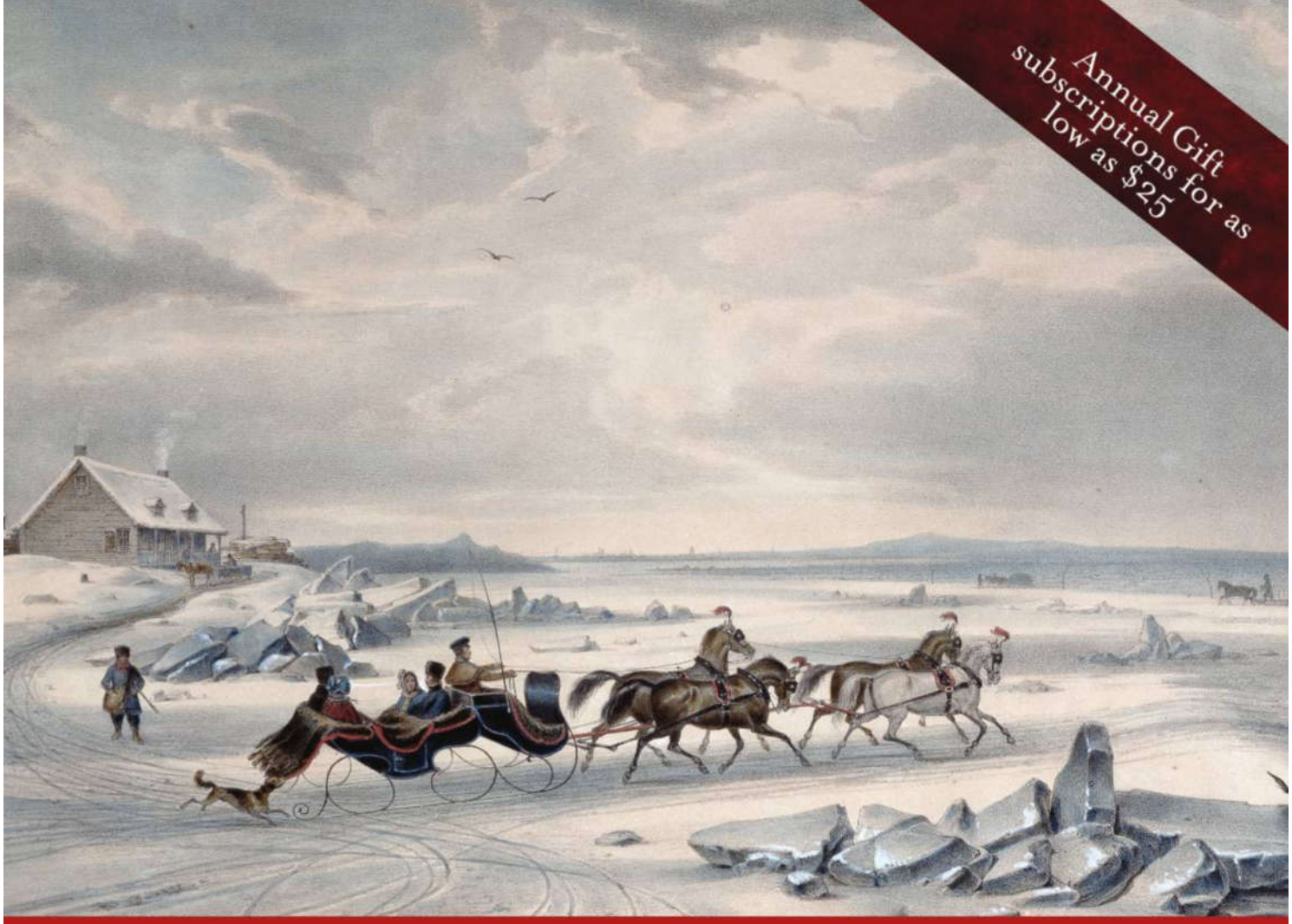

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DETAIL FROM *SLEIGH RACE NEAR MONTREAL, CORNELIUS KRIEGHOFF, 1846* © MONTREAL MUSEUM

Pugwash gives peace a chance

Visitors to the small village of Pugwash, Nova Scotia, might not imagine that in the midst of the Cold War it played host to one of the most important scientific conferences of the era. Now the village that is "World Famous for Peace" is again playing a key role in discussions about nuclear disarmament.

Throughout the 1950s, scientists the world over sought to diffuse nuclear tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union. The Russell-Einstein Manifesto, penned by British philosopher Bertrand Russell and signed by Albert Einstein only days before his death in 1955, called on scientists to "assemble in conference to appraise the perils that have arisen as a result of the development of weapons of mass destruction."

After the first attempted conference in India was cancelled due to the Suez Canal crisis, organizers turned to a Canadian benefactor. Cyrus Eaton, who had moved from Canada to the United States to become one of the most successful industrialists of his time, offered to finance the conference on the sole condition that it be held in the village of his birth, Pugwash.

In July 1957, twenty-two participants from ten countries arrived at Eaton's residence for five days of deliberations. This small group of pioneers helped forge a new tradition of scientific activism on behalf of humanity.

Today, more than 275 additional conferences have been staged around the world. In recognition of their determination and courage, the Pugwash Conferences and organizer Joseph Rotblat were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1995.

Delegates from around the world gathered in Pugwash this past July to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the initial conference. Tadatoshi Akiba, mayor of Hiroshima, Japan, and president of Mayors for Peace, delivered the keynote address.

"The Pugwash Conference represents the wisdom of humanity," said Akiba, who challenged world leaders to visit his own city. "Knowing what actually happened in Hiroshima and Nagasaki sixty-two years ago and understanding the hibakushas' [survivors'] message that came out of that experience could be the first step for them to forge the political will to eliminate nuclear weapons."

A lasting legacy for Pugwash is the development of a permanent educational centre to be called the Pugwash Peace Exchange. Stephen Leahey, founding chairman of the Pugwash Peace Exchange Society, developed the idea with Rotblat before the latter's death in 2005.

Getting nuclear weapons back on the discussion table is central to the organization's work. "Nuclear weapons went below the radar screen," Leahey explains. "We're in more and more danger now than we were in the Cold War."

The new 836-square-metre facility will combine history and participation through conferences, seminars, and educational displays that encourage guests to take an active role in their global environment. Organizers are hopeful the centre will open in 2009, and that it will continue the legacy started in Pugwash some fifty years before.

Anyone can join the Pugwash Peace Exchange Society, which has members across Canada and around the world. Leahey adds: "It's pretty hard not to act when you think about what's out there."

— Joel Ralph

PUGWASH PEACE EXCHANGE

Participants of the 1957 Pugwash Conference, including Cyrus Eaton (back row centre, dark suit) and Joseph Rotblat (back row, white shirt).

TAKE THE DAY OFF

October 3

To commemorate the 1927 opening of transatlantic telephone service between Canada and Britain. Reach out and touch someone.

Currents

Our home & native ...

Electric Oven

Electricity coursed through Thomas Ahearn's life. Nicknamed "the Edison of Canada" and "Electricity Ahearn," he advanced Ottawa, and the rest of Canada, into the electric age with several inventions and initiatives, including Ottawa's first electric streetcars and street lights, an electric flatiron, and an electric water heater.

On August 29, 1892, Ahearn became the first person in the world — or so it is believed — to cook an entire meal using electricity. And what a meal: Saginaw trout, potato croquettes, sugar-cured ham, lamb cutlets, stuffed loin of veal, strawberry puffs, chocolate cake, apple pie. He prepared twenty-one dishes in a streetcar shed and then took them to Ottawa's Windsor Hotel to be served to VIPs and journalists.

The two-metre-wide brick oven featured glass peepholes to allow viewing without heat loss and could produce temperatures "sufficient to roast an ox," *The Evening Journal* reported. The Windsor Hotel purchased one immediately, and the ovens were soon available to the public. However, the device's instability and a lack of infrastructure kept gas stoves in domestic kitchens until the 1930s. Ahearn traded his patent rights on the oven for stock in the American Heating Corporation, which went bankrupt. Luckily, it was a minor setback in an otherwise impressive career. **— Richard F.J. Wood**

Living History

Wonder trestles back on track

On August 16, 2003, a bolt of lightning touched the tinder-dry bush near Rattlesnake Island in Okanagan Mountain Park near Kelowna, British Columbia, sparking a firestorm that would rage for almost a month. When it was over, the blaze had consumed 270 homes, 26,000 hectares of land, and a beloved National Historic Site known as the Myra Canyon trestles.

Often called McCulloch's Wonder, after Andrew McCulloch, the Shakespeare-quoting engineer who built them more than ninety years ago, the string of wooden trestle bridges hung high on the walls of the steep alpine canyon in a seemingly impossible feat of engineering genius. Long taken out of service for trains and turned into a recreational hiking and cycling trail, the unique structures drew 50,000 visitors yearly. After the fire, all that was left of most of these awe-inspiring bridges were ragged stalks of charred timber.

COURTESY KATIM ENTERPRISES LTD.

A wooden trestle burns during a 2003 fire that destroyed or damaged fourteen of eighteen historic rail bridges in Myra Canyon, British Columbia.

October 24

To mark the first opening of the Toronto Stock Exchange in 1852. Buy low, sell high.

November 8

To celebrate the ninetieth anniversary of the formation of co-operative news service The Canadian Press (CP). Take it to the wire.

"There was really a great sadness in the community when the trestles burnt," says Ken Campbell of the Myra Canyon Trestle Restoration Society. "We got a lot of sympathetic responses from people all over the world who had walked or ridden on them."

Since 1992, the restoration society had worked hard to turn the trestles — and the entire Kettle Valley Railway — into a historic attraction that added $5 million a year to the local economy.

With their minds set on rebuilding, the group grimly assessed the situation. There were eighteen trestles in total — sixteen made of wood, two of steel. Twelve of the wooden ones were destroyed and the two steel trestles were extensively damaged. Making matters worse, the area consists of remote mountainous terrain and access was limited to rough, steep forestry roads. Loose rock above the destroyed trestles posed a hazard, and the society questioned whether the expertise to build these kinds of rail bridges still existed.

Fortunately, the bridges had been declared a National Historic Site in January 2003, just seven months before the fire — making it easier to apply for federal funding. The site was also part of the Trans-Canada Trail and was owned by the province of British Columbia, which readily recognized its heritage value.

Since the federal and provincial governments approved disaster funding in 2004, the cost of repairing the trestles has grown from an original estimate of $13.5 million to $17 million, says Campbell, who is also a member of a committee that oversees reconstruction.

Restoring the heritage character of the trestles has been among the greatest challenges. The committee recruited retired Canadian Pacific Railway workers experienced in timber-trestle construction as consultants and scoured CPR archives for the original plans. Despite a shortage of construction workers in British Columbia, the project's cachet attracted more qualified bidders than anticipated.

But before any work could be done, the rock-fall hazard had to be addressed. This was a bigger job than anyone imagined, Campbell said. Workers had to scale rock faces overhanging the trestles and knock off loose stones. Giant boulders that couldn't be removed were bolted into the solid rock walls to ensure they stayed put.

Next came the reconstruction of the foundations. No heavy equipment could be brought into the deep gullies where the foundations were located, so crews worked much as they did at the turn of the century — on foot, pushing wheelbarrows, and carrying shovels, pickaxes, and bags of cement. After crews poured the foundations, they used cranes to put the rest of the pieces into place.

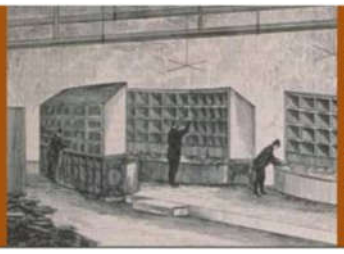
The crews could work on only two bridges at a time — one at each end of the former rail line. It was a slow, laborious process. One bridge took almost a year to build.

Following three years of construction, the project is set for completion this winter. In spring, the trail will be resurfaced and interpretive displays set up. A grand reopening ceremony is planned for June.

For Ken Campbell, there was never any doubt that the Myra Canyon trestle bridges were worth restoring.

"It's a special place," says Campbell. "It seems to have a magical effect on people, including me."

— Nelle Oosterom



November 28

To remember the day the Canada Post Office issued its first postcards, in 1871. Stick something on the fridge.

Calendar

Emily Carr, *Big Raven*, 1931, oil on canvas.

COURTESY VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

Alberta

Emily Carr: New Perspectives

Featuring 150 paintings, ceramics, photographs, and other objects, *New Perspectives* lets visitors see Emily Carr — best known for her paintings of First Nations villages and landscapes of the northwest Pacific coast — through the lens of early twentieth-century exhibitions that presented her work.

October 25, 2007, to January 26, 2008
Glenbow Museum, Calgary
glenbow.org • 403-268-4100

Ontario

Out From Under: Disability, History and Things to Remember

Follow the struggles of disabled Canadians and their supporters in this groundbreaking display by Ryerson University's School of Disability Studies. Part of the 2007 Abilities Arts Festival, the exhibit is one of 51 projects supported by the Hbc Local History Grant Program, established in 2007 to promote greater public awareness of Canadian history.

October 26 to 30, 2007
The Columbus Centre, Toronto
abilitiesartsfestival.org • 416-966-0393

The Order of Canada: They Desire a Better Country

The centerpiece of Canada's system of honours celebrates its fortieth anniversary in 2007 with this exhibition of photographs, biographical notes, and quotations. Get to know 32 recipients of the Order of Canada who have distinguished themselves in their respective cultural, social, economic, and scientific domains.

Ongoing to May 11, 2008
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Currents

Moment

October 31, 1982: Marguerite Bourgeoys, the co-founder of Montreal, is canonized as Canada's first woman saint

In an age when nuns were largely confined to the solitude of monastic life, Marguerite Bourgeoys's unconventional mission and devotion to the settlers of New France earned her reverence as Saint Marguerite of Canada some three centuries before her eventual canonization.

Born in 1620 into a bourgeois family, she could have enjoyed a comfortable and secure life in imperial France. But at age twenty, in her hometown of Troyes, Bourgeoys's life changed forever as she passed in front of a statue of the Virgin Mary. She later wrote: "I thought it was very beautiful, and at the same time I felt myself so touched and so changed that I no longer knew myself." It was a spiritual revelation that would lead her far from the comforts of home.

PIERRE LE BER AND JON SMITH PALARDY/MARGUERITE BOURGEOYS MUSEUM

Pierre Le Ber's deathbed portrait of Marguerite Bourgeoys (left) was painted over in the nineteenth century in an apparent attempt to provide a more sympathetic image. After an analysis showed layers of paint, restoration work in 1964 revealed Le Ber's original image. Both the restored original and a copy of the revised portrait (right) can be seen in the True Likeness Room of the Marguerite Bourgeoys Museum.

After dedicating her life to the church in France, she met Paul de Chomedey de Maisonneuve, the founder and governor of the colony of Ville-Marie, later Montreal, who was looking for the settlement's first teacher. Eager to try missionary work, Bourgeoys asked to be sent to the colony — even claiming the Virgin Mary told her to "go to Canada. I will not abandon you." Her passion and piety eventually convinced Maisonneuve, and she arrived in New France on September 22, 1653.

Bourgeoys understood that the women of the colony would have a large and important role to play in its survival and sought to establish the settlement's first school for girls. But, due to infant mortality, "for about eight years we were unable to find any children to raise," Bourgeoys wrote. Soon enough, however, she began receiving the filles du roi — young orphan girls sent by King Louis XIV to start families in the colony. She gave refuge to the girls and prepared them for their future role, even acting as a matchmaker for the men of New France.

Among the accomplishments that earned her reputation as co-founder of Montreal and "mother of the colony," Bourgeoys oversaw the building of Montreal's first stone church, opened the colony's first school, and established a society of missionary nuns, the Congrégation de Notre-Dame de Montréal, which saw to the spiritual, mental, and physical well-being of the settlers.

Women in the church were expected to lead a sheltered life, but Bourgeoys fought tradition to ensure the sisters remained free to work and teach throughout the colony. She returned to France three times to bring new recruits and to petition for her congregation's survival. On one trip she stood before an impressed King Louis XIV, who commended her for the work she had done for France and its colonies and granted her congregation civil recognition in the form of letters patent allowing the sisters to continue their work.

Bourgeoys's self-sacrifice is legendary. In 1700, after she asked God to take "I who am old and useless" and spare an ailing young nun who "may yet render you great service," Bourgeoys became ill and never recovered. The younger sister recovered within days. Other miracles were reported in the years to come, and the few objects Bourgeoys had owned came to be revered for their healing powers.

Pope Pius XII beatified Marguerite Bourgeoys on November 12, 1950, and on October 31, 1982, with her canonization by Pope John Paul II, she became Canada's first woman saint. In 2005, her remains were returned to her chapel in Montreal, Notre-Dame-de-Bon-Secours, which adjoins the Marguerite Bourgeoys Museum. Some twenty-six hundred sisters around the world continue her congregation's work.

— Christopher Webb

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David Pugliese on

Making it to the Top (of the World)

Twenty-five years after the first Canadian scaled Everest, some worry commercialism is cheapening the mountain.

Mount Everest, at 8,848 metres, is the highest peak in the world.

LAURIE SKRESLET

It was October 5, 1982, and Laurie Skreslet had just finished scaling a high rock wall — the last major obstacle he would face just below the summit of Mount Everest.

A short time later, the thirty-two-year-old Calgarian, still nursing fractured ribs from an earlier fall on the mountain, stood on top of the world's highest peak. Accompanied by two Sherpas, Skreslet had a spectacular view that stretched for hundreds of kilometres.

"We did it," Skreslet yelled into his walkie-talkie, signalling the news to his teammates down the mountain that the first Canadian had reached the summit of Mount Everest.

Skreslet stayed on the summit of the 8,848-metre mountain for a little more than a half-hour. The event, twenty-five years ago, is considered a historic achievement in Canadian mountaineering.

The expedition — which took four years to plan — had, at the time, been front-page news in Canada. It had been through tragedy, with three Sherpa climbers and cameraman Blair Griffiths, of Vancouver, dying in separate accidents at Everest's treacherous Khumbu Icefall. It had also been through controversy, when, after the deaths, six of the team's fifteen climbers walked away from the expedition.

The original plan was to have the Canadians ascend a previously unclimbed and extremely difficult route up Everest. But after the accidents and the decision by some climbers to return to Canada, that ambitious proposal was dropped. Instead, the team switched to the South Col route, first conquered in 1953 by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay.

Canadian climber Sharon Wood sees the 1982 expedition as a pivotal point in the country's mountaineering history. "It was definitely a foundation, a necessary step in the evolution of Canadian climbing," says Wood, a Canmore, Alberta, resident who in 1986 became the first woman from North America to reach Everest's summit.

She points out that from a mountaineering perspective, the 1982 expedition was nothing special; the climbers followed a standard route on the mountain. But what stood out was how the team rebounded in the face of adversity. It was that perseverance that made the expedition special.

"I think it was a great achievement," says Wood, who climbed with Skreslet during her 1986 expedition.

Twenty-five years later, Everest is barely recognizable to professional mountaineers. Commercial travel-adventure companies have set up ropes almost from the base, on both the Nepalese and Tibetan

© KELLY THOMAS / GAMMA - EYEDEA PIX/OPRESSE

sides of the peak, to give those with little climbing experience a chance to scale the mountain.

Those clients hook into the ropes and are guided up Everest by Sherpas and professional climbers. Anyone with $25,000 can sign on for a trip and try their luck at reaching the summit.

Skreslet says advances in technology, such as lightweight equipment, improved oxygen systems for breathing at high altitudes, and communications that allow for up-to-the minute weather reports, have also made Everest more accessible.

When Skreslet reached the summit in 1982, only 130 other people in history had gone before him. This year alone, however, more than five hundred people — most of them clients of commercial guiding companies — have scaled the mountain successfully.

There is heated debate these days on whether the accomplishment of climbing Everest is being destroyed by commercialism.

Some, like Wood, argue that what was once an icon in the world of mountaineering has become just another notch in the belt for overachieving, wealthy tourists. "I think it really desecrates the mountain and what we once knew it to be," Wood said.

Canadian mountaineering, meanwhile, is thriving. Wood says a group of hard-core Canadian climbers have been climbing difficult routes on peaks around the world. They tend to shun publicity and are part of a mountaineering community that measures success in terms of how a peak is scaled as well as the difficulty of the climb.

Skreslet says he can see both sides of the Everest issue. He acknowledges that someone who is fit, has money, and selects the right professional guiding company has a good chance of reaching the summit. But people still die and the weather is unpredictable.

"I have no less respect for the mountain," Skreslet explained.

Skreslet also notes there are twelve other routes on the mountain that are not attempted by commercially guided trips because they are simply too difficult for their clients.

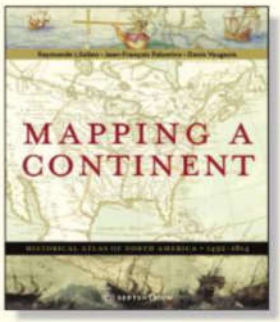
The ongoing debate over Everest is an emotional one that will likely never be settled. Those who take guided trips on Everest will forever be seen as outsiders who haven't paid their dues. But similar squabbles have been going on for decades within the mountaineering community, with disputes about who climbed what first and when, or whether they did it in the proper style.

There will always be a small elite in any sport that prefers to toil out of the limelight, honing their skills for their own reasons, whether for the purity of the task at hand or for their own egotistical desire to be better than the pack.

Ultimately, however, all this has little impact on the public. Climbing Everest is still largely seen as a major achievement, and one that remains the accomplishment of only a few thousand people.

Journalist David Pugliese is the military affairs reporter for the *Ottawa Citizen* and a long-time amateur climber.

History by the Book



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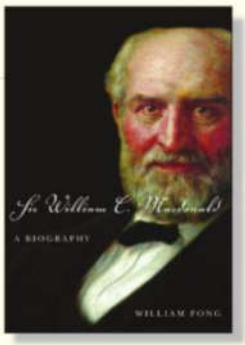

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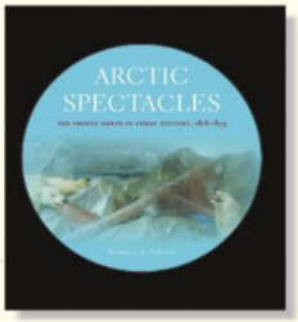

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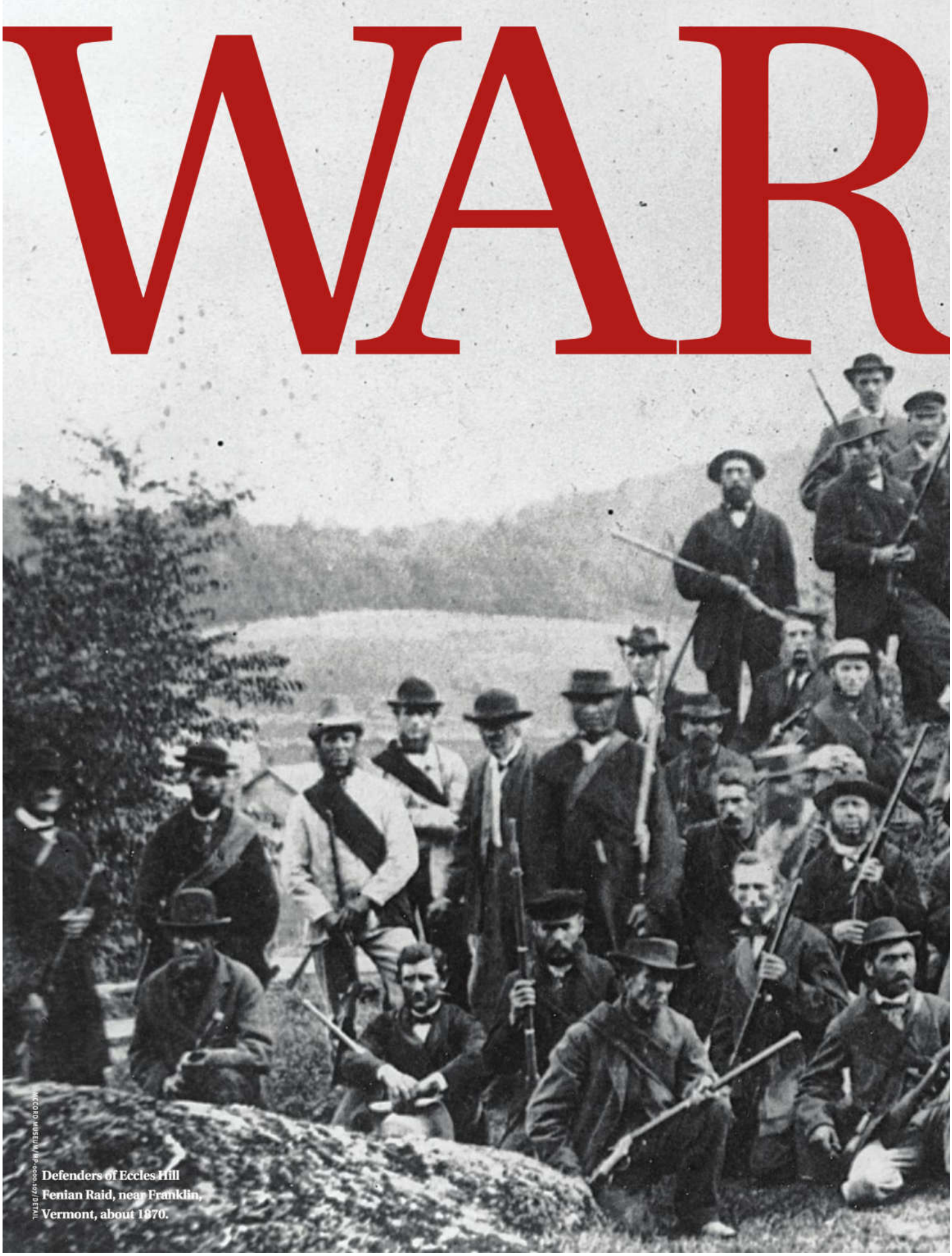
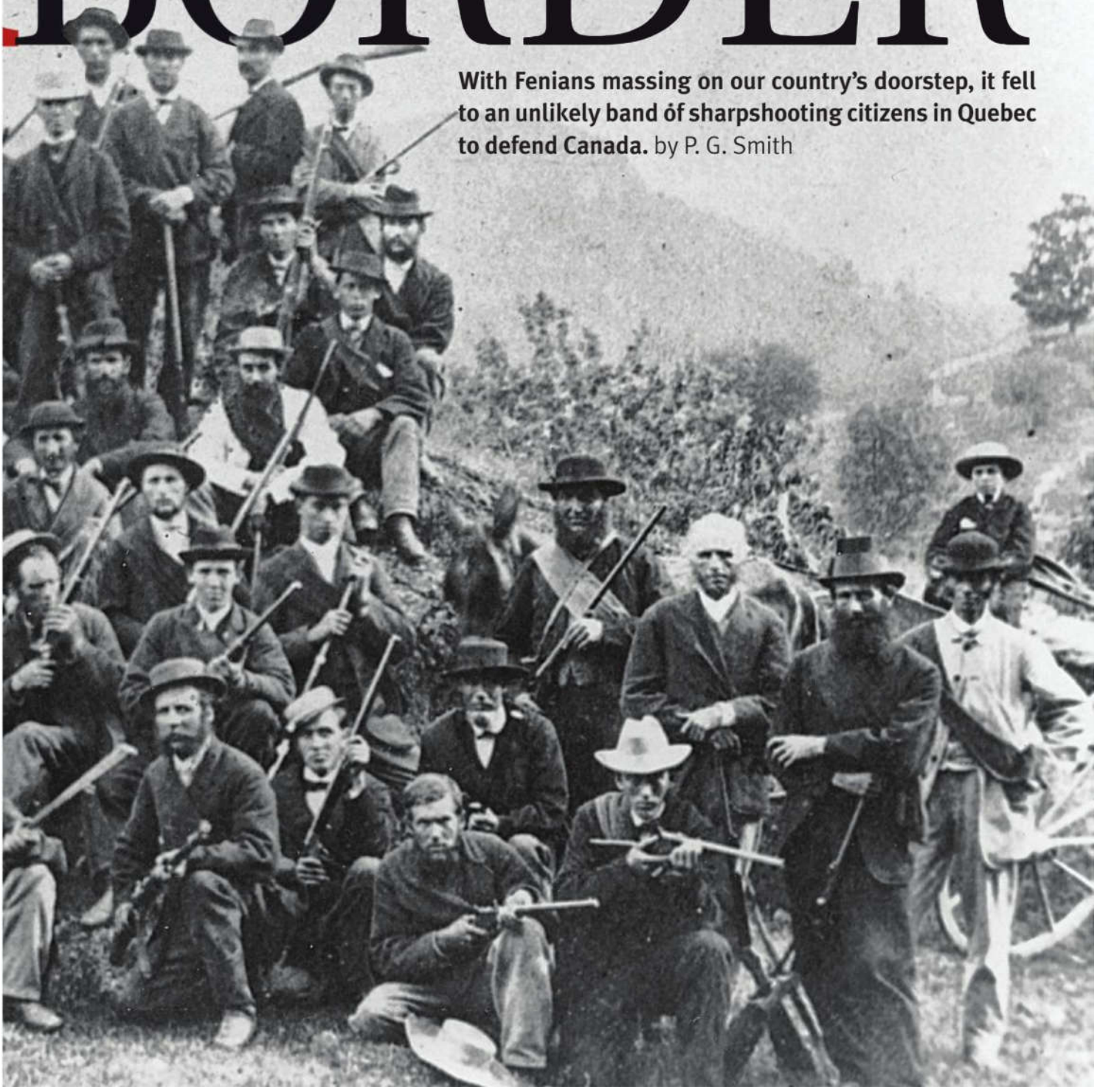


Defenders of Eccles Hill
Fenian Raid, near Franklin,
Vermont, about 1870.

MCCORD MUSEUM, MP-0000.197.DETAIL

AT THE BORDER

With Fenians massing on our country's doorstep, it fell to an unlikely band of sharpshooting citizens in Quebec to defend Canada. by P. G. Smith



John Bell squinted down the barrel of his Ballard Sporting Rifle just as he had many times while target shooting with the other Home Guards. He swallowed the last few morsels of the Boston crackers he'd been chewing, probably the only food he'd eaten on the morning of May 25, 1870. It was now nearly noon.

The twenty or so men around him, local farmers and tradesmen like himself, lay hidden behind the boulders and tree trunks of Eccles Hill, Quebec, keeping a careful watch on the little wooden bridge that spanned Groat's Creek, near the border between the United States and the new Dominion of Canada. Suddenly the men stirred — motioning to each other and whispering sharp warnings.

Bell spotted the figures in blue and green, marching toward the creek like seasoned soldiers. They cheered as they broke ranks to file over the bridge and reassemble on the dirt road on the other side. Bell drew a bead on one figure in a green jacket and blue military cap. At more than 400 metres, the man must have appeared to be no bigger than an insect. Instinctively, Bell inhaled, probably oblivious to the rich scents of the wildflowers in bloom on that spring morning. He let out half a breath, squeezed the trigger, and felt the butt stock slam into his shoulder as his rifle belched out flame, smoke, and a deadly slug less than twelve millimetres in diameter. He quickly reloaded as the men around him fired at the fleeing figures near the bridge.

When the smoke cleared momentarily, Bell saw that the man at whom he'd fired, John Rowe, a mechanic and volunteer fireman from Burlington, Vermont, lay face down in the dusty road, his hands clenched around his Springfield Rifle Musket. John Bell had killed his first human being.

The remarkable sequence of events that led to the Battle of Eccles Hill began just before the American Civil War. During the 1850s, a clandestine independence movement was born in Ireland. The secret society was called the Irish Republican Brotherhood, or, as they eventually came to be known, the Fenians. The Fenian dream was to free Ireland from the clutches of the British Empire by any means, and those means included assassination, terrorism, and war in its former North American colony of Canada.

John O'Neill's skills as a former Union cavalry captain were put to good use in his role as Fenian commander.

The Fenians' war plan involved a multi-pronged attack to seize Montreal, Hamilton, and Toronto. The invasion date was secretly set for June 1, 1866. However, when the appointed date arrived, it was clear that many of the Fenian forces were not ready to act. In Buffalo, the commander never showed up, nor did most of the troops called for in the plan. John O'Neill, an intrepid former Union cavalry captain from Kentucky, nonetheless assumed command of two thousand men and seized Fort Erie, Ontario. O'Neill's ragtag army defeated a force of Canadian militia in a sharp engagement at Ridgeway. However, with his troops cut off from reinforcements, he led a hasty retreat as a larger force of British regulars approached from the north. He was promptly arrested in the United States, but hailed by the Irish-American community as a hero and a patriot.

As events unfolded in southern Ontario, another Fenian force assembled in St. Albans, Vermont, across from Quebec. On June 7, 1866, the West Point-educated Gen. Samuel P. Spear led an unruly force of fifteen hundred Fenians across the border and set up camp in Pigeon Hill, Quebec, about seventy kilometres southeast of Montreal. A skittish band of Canadian militia retreated at the first sight of Spear's army, and many of the local population took refuge with friends and relatives to the north.

The invasion contravened American neutrality laws, which were first enacted in 1794 and intended to restrict private citizens from involvement in foreign conflicts. In an effort to suffocate the invasion, Maj.-Gen. George Meade of the United States Army, and the victor of Gettysburg, seized supplies headed for the Fenians. Spear's undisciplined force, cut off from logistical support, responded by plundering undefended homes and farms.

In an incident that would prove to be momentous, a band of Fenians stopped at the Westover farm in Dunham, Quebec, and demanded a hot meal. Asa Westover and his family complied with the request and fed the hungry invaders. However, after eating their fill, the Fenians ransacked the house, helping themselves to the family's valuables. An enraged Westover would never forget this humiliation.

Spear, meanwhile, quickly realized it was only a matter of time before the British army arrived to deal with his Fenian force, which was now dwindling from desertions. Reluctantly, Spear ordered his men to retreat to Vermont on June 9, 1866.

In the ensuing days, the residents of the Canadian border towns, escorted by British troops and Canadian militia, returned to their desecrated homes to repair the damage and rebuild their lives.

The Fenian movement in the United States gained energy from the events of 1866. Participants in the raids, if apprehended at all, were released after short prison terms and treated like heroes in their own communities.

The momentum was short-lived, however. By the late 1860s, infighting and scandals had sapped the movement's strength, causing traditional funding channels to dry up. Realizing that military action increased membership, donations, and enthusiasm, O'Neill — who had emerged as the leader of the most popular faction and was promoted to general — began plans for another invasion of Canada in an effort to shore up declining support.

The men of the Canadian border towns, meanwhile, initiated some planning of their own. Reasoning that the Brit-

CP PHOTO

The Pigeon Hill (Eccles Hill) Camp of the 60th Battalion, which played a major part in the Fenian Raid of 25 May 1870.

ish army and the Canadian militia could not be relied upon to defend them, they resolved to take matters into their own hands. On June 20, 1868, thirty men signed an agreement at the Seeley Hotel in Dunham, Quebec, which established the Home Guards. The agreement united the men for the "mutual protection of our homes and property … from any threatened Fenian invasion or other band of robbers."

Asa Westover, whose farm had been ransacked by the Fenians two years previously, was elected president of the Home Guards. At the time of the agreement, Westover was a fifty-one-year-old farmer whose United Empire Loyalist grandfather had fled Sheffield, Massachusetts, in the midst of the American Revolution. The Westover farm was prosperous enough to employ three labourers and a servant. Westover was a churchwarden who was active in the choir and contributed generously to the upkeep of the Anglican church in Frelighsburg, Quebec, about seventy-five kilometres southeast of Montreal. There is no indication that he had any military experience whatsoever.

After the defence organization was established, Westover and another member of the Home Guards travelled to the United States to purchase arms and ammunition for the new force. They chose as their main weapon the Ballard Sporting Rifle, a single-shot, small-calibre weapon prized for its accuracy at long range. Usually more suited to the needs of hunters than soldiers, the rifle would prove in the end to be a good choice.

The Home Guards, who met regularly for target practice, were ridiculed by some of their neighbours, who felt a Fenian invasion was unlikely to happen again. Reasoning that Eccles Hill would provide an excellent strategic position in the event of another attack, Westover and Andrew Teneyck, one of the vice-presidents of the Home Guards, visited the south side of the hill on July 1, 1868, to mark fighting positions. Miss Julia Westover, sister of Asa, would later write after the battle: "I was at home the day Asa and Andrew went with their guns to pick out the spot and range the proper distance to shoot a Fenian."

In April 1870, the Home Guards, whose numbers had more than doubled, adopted a more military structure and elected Asa Westover as their captain. They also named subordinate officers and chose a sort of uniform — a red sash worn over the right shoulder.

The Home Guards, who had shown remarkable military sophistication in their planning, now revealed their trump card — expert military intelligence. A Vermont resident, S.N. Hunter, had offered helpful information to the Canadian militia during the Fenian raid of 1866. Since then, Hunter had moved to Canada and joined the Home Guards. However, he remained on friendly terms with his former neighbours in Vermont, who kept him informed about Fenian preparations for war.

On the afternoon of May 23, 1870, Hunter received word that the anticipated Fenian advance was imminent.

MISSISQUOI HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Canadian militiamen stand over the dead body of Fenian John Rowe of Burlington, Vermont on 25, May 1870.

HOME GUARD JOHN BELL'S FIRST SHOT STRUCK FENIAN JOHN ROWE IN THE NECK. ROWE WAS KILLED INSTANTLY AS HE PITCHED FORWARD ON THE DUSTY ROAD.

Hunter raced to Frelighsburg, where he alerted several of the town leaders. Later that evening, he and another member of the Home Guards made a reconnaissance mission over the border. When they reached the town of Franklin, Vermont, near midnight, the townsfolk were gathered in great anticipation as the first wagonloads of Fenian arms and ammunition arrived.

The two Canadian amateur spies raced back to Frelighsburg, where they awakened the town officials and reported what they had seen in Franklin. The local leaders then fired off three telegrams: one to Lt.-Col. William Osborne Smith, assistant adjutant general of the Montreal Military District; one to Lt.-Col. Brown Chamberlin, commander of the local militia force; and one to the provincial government.

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***Fenian Raid,* John Henry Walker (1831–1899) about 1870.**

After some discussion, it was decided that the Home Guards would assemble on Eccles Hill and take up their carefully marked fighting positions. Dawn was just a few hours away as the call went out to the farmers and tradesmen who were soon to become warriors.

The rain continued to fall during the gloomy morning hours of Tuesday, May 24, 1870, as the Home Guards gathered on Eccles Hill. The anxious men speculated about the activities on the other side of the border. Hunter volunteered to once again scout out the situation in Vermont. This time he found more than seventy wagonloads of weapons, ammunition, and other military equipment stockpiled by the sides of the roads, but he did not see any large concentrations of Fenian troops.

Westover accompanied Hunter to Frelighsburg to report this new information to the authorities. But when the two men arrived, they were informed that Brown Chamberlin and Osborne Smith had cabled back a discouraging response to the telegram that had been sent to them from Frelighsburg the previous day. The authorities — who were being careful to keep secret their own plans for meeting the Fenian threat — replied that they did not believe Hunter's reports of Fenian movements to be credible. To the Home Guards, the meaning seemed clear — they could expect no help in opposing the Fenian advance.

As the bleak afternoon drew to a close, Westover assembled the Home Guards and organized them into a

MICHEL ROULEAU

night watch and a day shift as they settled in to their grim, determined vigil near the border.

About nine o'clock that night, a messenger arrived from Frelighsburg with another telegram from Montreal. This time the message was more encouraging:

"Westover and Red Scarf Men should occupy old Fenian position at once, if possible, and pester the flank of any party crossing. I go to Stanbridge [Quebec] by next train. B. Chamberlin, Lt.-Col." The earlier telegram had apparently been part of a ruse to keep the military's plans secret.

The Home Guards were filled with renewed hope. The Canadian militia intended to join the Home Guards in the fight. The farmers returned to their watch with a strengthened sense of purpose. They would need it.

Shortly after midnight, the jingle and squeak of an approaching wagon could be heard through the misty darkness. Two Home Guards halted the wagon and asked the driver and passenger their business. One of the men in the wagon whispered the Fenian password, "Winooski," and then explained that they were to report to O'Neill, the Fenian general. The Fenians were instead briskly spirited away as prisoners of war by an escort of five armed Home Guards.

At four o'clock on the morning of Wednesday, May 25, 1870, twenty-two Canadian militiamen from Dunham arrived at Eccles Hill to reinforce the Home Guards. Near dawn, another twenty militia soldiers came in from Stanbridge, about twenty-five kilometres northwest of Frelighsburg. Although there were rumoured to be thousands of Fenians arriving in Vermont, the sturdy Canadian force at Eccles Hill was growing in strength and confidence.

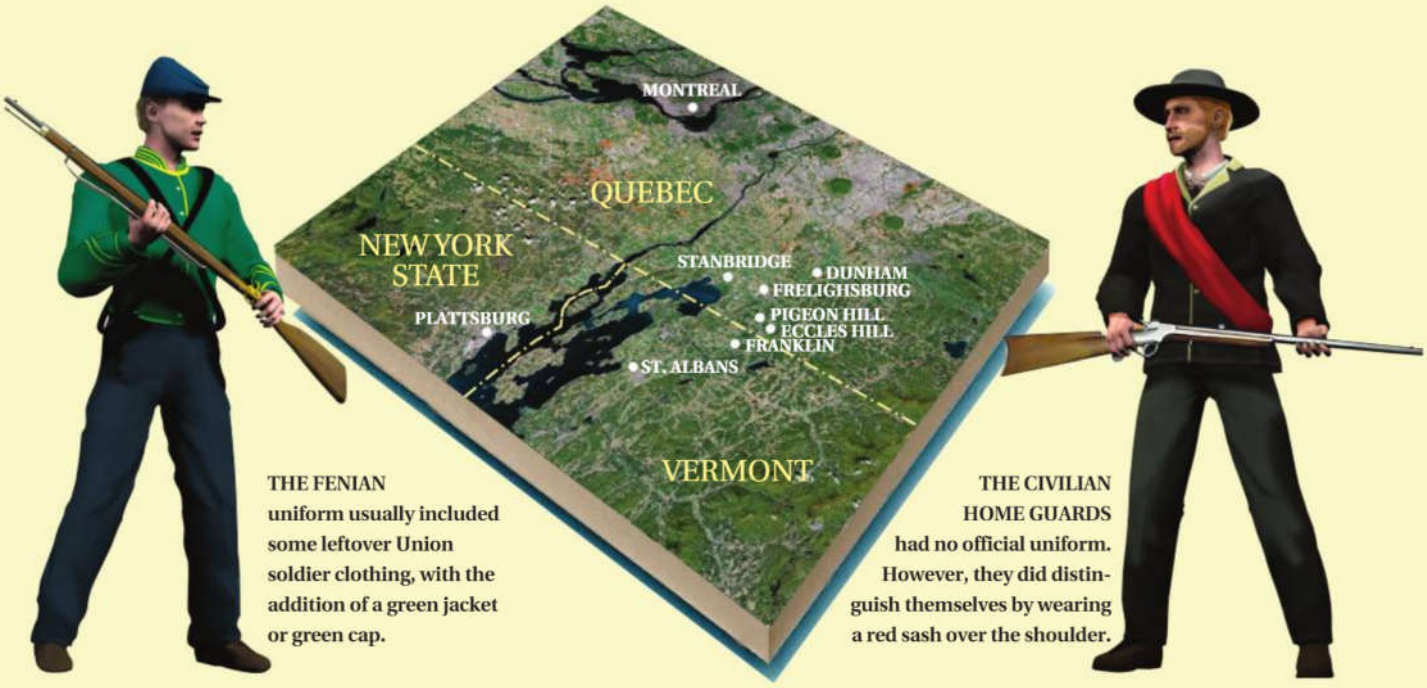
As the spring sunshine dried the soggy fields around Eccles Hill, Westover released half of his men to get a hot meal. Many of them hadn't left their defensive positions in twenty-four hours. Westover probably feared that, for some, it would be their last meal.

Just after half the Canadian force had left for their breakfast at a local farm, the Fenians began to assemble on the Vermont side of Groat's Creek. Clad in dark green uniform jackets or blue Union Army coats, the Fenians presented a daunting sight as they formed ranks and shouldered their gleaming Springfield rifles with fixed bayonets. While many were combat veterans of the Civil War, there were also pink-faced teenagers in the ranks. In his report after the battle, O'Neill said of his soldiers, "Many of them were boys who had never been in a fight before."

A correspondent with the *Boston Daily Advertiser* spoke with O'Neill just before the assault and reported, "General O'Neill is in the best of spirits and anticipates no serious resistance in Canada. He hopes there will be enough to amuse his men." O'Neill, never one to shy away from drama or bombast, addressed the two hundred or so just before they went to fight, referring to them

THE BATTLE OF ECCLES HILL

The Fenian invaders massed hear the border at Franklin and St. Albans before attacking. The civilian defenders at Eccles Hill waited for militia and regular forces to arrive from Stanbridge Station.



THE FENIAN uniform usually included some leftover Union soldier clothing, with the addition of a green jacket or green cap.

THE CIVILIAN HOME GUARDS had no official uniform. However, they did distinguish themselves by wearing a red sash over the shoulder.

as "soldiers of the advance guard of the American Irish army, for the liberation of Ireland from the yoke of our oppressor…." With a cheer, the Irish-Americans charged across the bridge onto Canadian soil.

The anxious Canadians gripped their rifles and peered through their sights as they tracked the forward movement of the Fenians invaders. As they had discussed many times, they squeezed off their first rounds only when the green and blue figures reached Canadian soil. At that moment, the Home Guards ceased to be farmers and neighbours — the amusement had begun.

Home Guard John Bell's first shot struck Fenian John Rowe in the neck. Rowe was killed instantly as he pitched forward on the dusty road.

After the initial volley, the Fenians scrambled for cover under the bridge, in the creek bed, and in farm buildings behind the creek. Home Guard Thomas Shephard of Frelighsburg shot and killed Fenian M. O'Brien, of Moriah, New York, as the Irish-American ran for cover through a field behind the creek.

Meanwhile, Osborne Smith, commander of the Montreal militia, had left Eccles Hill and was on his way to Stanbridge Station to bring up reinforcements. When he learned that the Fenian assault had commenced, he reversed direction and galloped full tilt back to Eccles Hill. Disregarding the Fenian fire, the Crimean War veteran rode onto the summit, dismounted, and took command of the border defence.

The battle now became a steady firefight, as the well-concealed Canadians exchanged shots with the Fenians, who had found cover near the border. The Franklin House Hotel was converted into a makeshift field hospital as wounded Fenians were evacuated from the border. A reporter for the Vermont newspaper *Burlington Free Press* described one victim of the fighting: "He was a boy of nineteen or twenty, in a green jacket and grey trowsers [*sic*]. He gave us his name — Frank Carrigan of Bridgeport, Connecticut. He was ghastly pale, and suffering much from a wound in the abdomen, the ball having passed down through the groin and thigh. A doctor came as we stood by him, and gave it as his opinion that the ball had gone through the bladder, in which case the wound will be mortal."

O'Neill, meanwhile, took cover in a Vermont house near the border, directing the attack on Eccles Hill. However, the home's owner spoiled the Fenian general's vantage point by evicting him.

Until then, George P. Foster, the United States marshall for Vermont, had been helplessly observing the Fenians' flagrant violation of U.S. neutrality laws. Upon seeing O'Neill, he decided it was time for action. Foster arrested O'Neill, spiriting the compliant Fenian commander away to jail in nearby St. Albans. Critics would later speculate that the apprehension had been pre-arranged between Foster and O'Neill, but the Fenian general would insist that he was abducted by physical force at the point of a loaded revolver.

O'Neill's ignominious exit was observed by a member of his staff, Col. Henri LeCaron, adjutant general, also known as Thomas Billis Beach. The twenty-nine-year-old LeCaron looked on, but did nothing. Years later, the Civil War veteran and doctor revealed himself as a British agent who was reporting directly to Canadian officials. Meanwhile, John Boyle O'Reilly, a former Irish revolutionary who was reporting for the *Boston Pilot*, an Irish-Catholic newspaper, temporarily assumed a leadership role and attempted unsuccessfully to organize a Fenian counterattack. (After witnessing the futile Fenian assault on this day, he renounced military action as a method of gaining Ireland's independence, instead favouring political advocacy. He

The Rise of the Fenians

Waves of destitute Irish immigrants settled in North America to escape the potato famine of 1845–49. Embittered by the indifference of the British government to the suffering of their people during the famine, they formed the Irish Republican Brotherhood, which came to be known as the Fenian movement. The name Fenian was derived from Fianna, a legendary band of warriors in Celtic mythology.

By the time the American Civil War broke out in 1861, there were Fenian cells within both the Union and Confederate armies, as well as in every major city throughout the United States. After the war ended in 1865, Fenian membership swelled. The movement provided a welcome opportunity for camaraderie. It also offered the romance of a lofty campaign for restless Irish-American Civil War veterans returning to the drudgery and misery of American urban life in the industrial age. Despite the supposed secrecy of the movement, there were frequent public fundraising events and mass meetings throughout the United States in the 1860s.

Bonds were issued by the American Fenian movement around 1865. They were issued to raise money for the cause of liberating Ireland.

The Fenians developed an audacious plan to seize Canada and establish a "Dominion of the Brotherhood north of the St. Lawrence." More sensible members of the movement realized that the plan was foolhardy, but believed that an Irish-American invasion of Canada might precipitate broader hostilities between Great Britain and the United States. This, they hoped, would set the stage for an armed uprising in Ireland. Their ultimate goal was to gain independence for their home country. **— P.G.S.**

went on to become a renowned journalist, novelist, and Catholic poet.)

As for the Canadian defenders on Eccles Hill, their sharpshooting rifles were trained on two main forces. One was a group of about fifty Irish-Americans, led by Gen. J.J. Donnelly, who were huddled in a valley, where they could neither advance nor retreat without exposing themselves to Canadian fire. The other was a force of late-arriving New York Fenians, who advanced on a wooded hillside on the Canadian right (they had been misdirected there by the spy LeCaron). The plan was for the New Yorkers to distract the Canadian forces, thus allowing Donnelly's men to escape from the valley. The New Yorkers brought up a six-pound, breech-loading field cannon, got off a few poorly aimed cannon rounds, and then let loose a volley of rifle fire.

Donnelly and his men knew that it was retreat now or risk being taken prisoner. They broke from their covered positions to scramble to higher ground. The Canadians, however, were not distracted by the New York firepower and trained their rifles on the fleeing Fenians. Donnelly was struck in the chest and sustained a serious wound from which he would later recover. The accurate Canadian fire also hit several other fleeing Irish-Americans, but none sustained life-threatening injuries.

Osborne Smith, realizing the Fenian artillery piece posed an immediate threat to the Canadian force, ordered the Home Guards and the Sixtieth Missisquoi Battalion of Canadian Infantry to advance and dislodge the New York Fenians from their position on the wooded hillside. The Canadians charged down the hill, startling the Fenians, who promptly fled — leaving the cannon behind. With great difficulty, officers restrained the jubilant Red Sash men and militia soldiers from pursuing their enemies across the border. The Home Guards retrieved the cannon, which they regarded as a great war trophy. To this day it rests on the summit of Eccles Hill as a memorial to the Canadian defenders.

As darkness fell, the drama drew to a close. The dejected Fenians retreated to Vermont. The Canadians retrieved John Rowe's body from the road and buried it by moonlight under a rock cairn on top of Eccles Hill. Spear, the Fenian general who had plundered the border region in 1866, arrived in St. Albans, Vermont, to send whoever was left with some fight in him over to Malone, New York — where more Fenian supplies were stockpiled — to mount another attack on Quebec and take one more grasp at glory. However, two days later, a combined force of Canadian militia and British regulars easily repulsed a half-hearted assault on the border at Holbrook's Corners, Quebec.

On Saturday, May 28, 1870, Maj.-Gen. George Meade arrived in St. Albans with a small American army force to ensure that there were no further violations of American neutrality laws.

On May 30, Lt.-Gen. James Alexander Lindsay, commander of the British forces in Canada, accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince Arthur, son of Queen Victoria, and then serving in Canada with the Rifles Brigade, reviewed the Canadian forces on Eccles Hill. Lindsay, as "Lieutenant General Commanding Her Majesty's Forces in Canada," thanked the assembled troops and stated: "Their good service, energy, and promptitude have achieved the utter defeat and the demoralization of the Fenians." Several years later, a grateful Empire issued medals to all who had fought in the Battle of Eccles Hill.

Eventually, the newspaper reporters and government officials forgot about the small towns near Eccles Hill. O'Neill, Boyle O'Reilly, LeCaron, Osborne Smith, Brown Chamberlin, and even Prince Arthur went on to achieve notoriety or infamy in other places at other times. Life returned to normal in the lush green fields and wooded hills of Quebec's Eastern Townships and the Home Guards returned to their farms and businesses. The peaceful border region remained untroubled throughout the natural lives of the Home Guards.

MISSISQUOI HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Home Guards pose with captured Fenian artillery piece after the Battle of Eccles Hill.

In the end, the Fenian attacks may have had the unintended consequence of strengthening Canadian pride and identity. Historian Hereward Senior, in his 1991 book *The Last Invasion of Canada*, summed up the effect of the raids:

> "For Canada the raids did a great deal. Apart from helping cement federation and improving the quality of the militia, the raids aroused a martial spirit among Canadians that could be enjoyed without the cost of war."

P. G. Smith is an educator, military officer and freelance magazine writer. An Irish-American whose grandfather was born in the Maritimes, Smith has been fascinated by the Fenians since his childhood. He lives and writes in Ashburnham, Massachusetts. (The author wishes to thank Judy Antle of the Missisquoi Historical Society for her support and expert advice.)

Et Cetera

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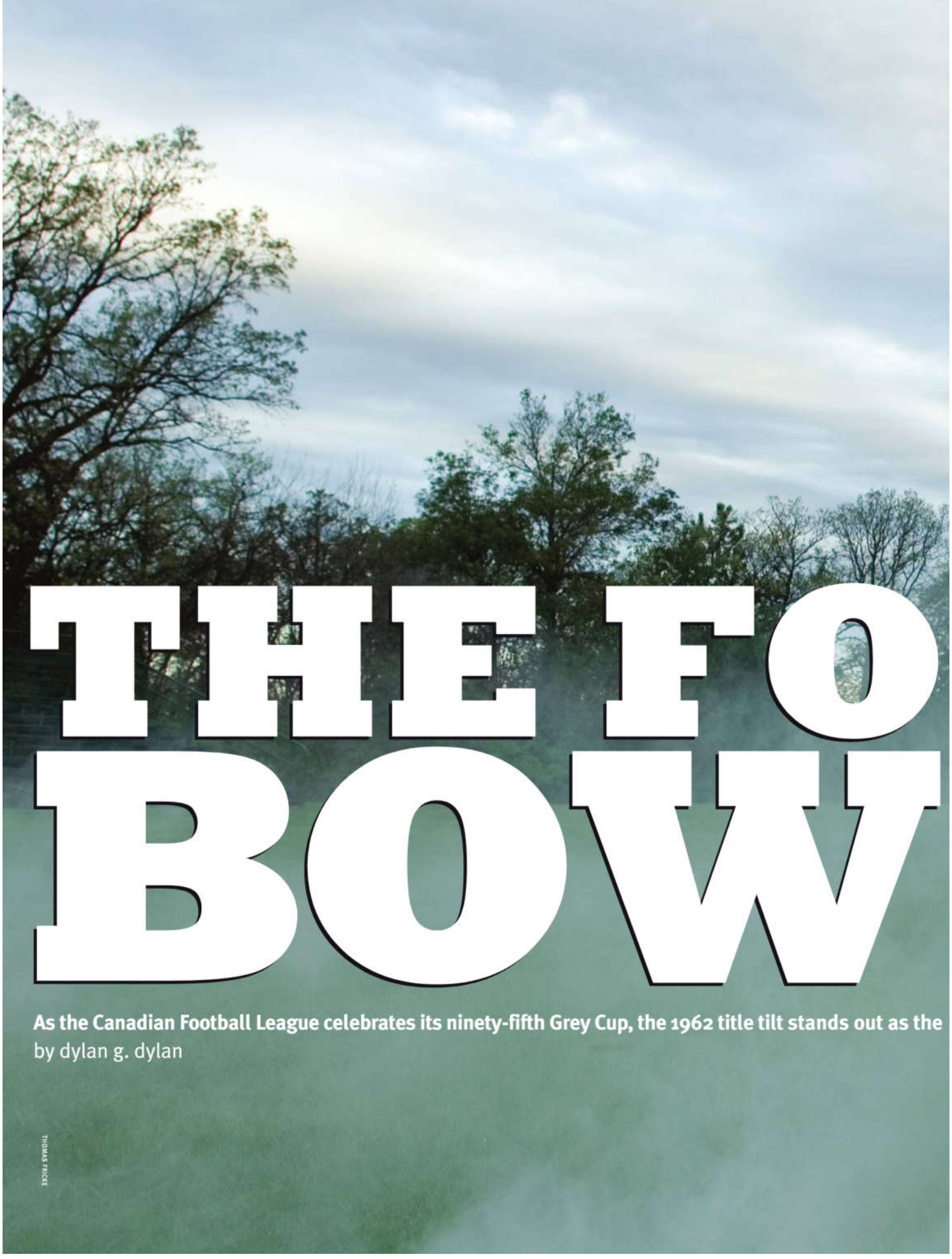
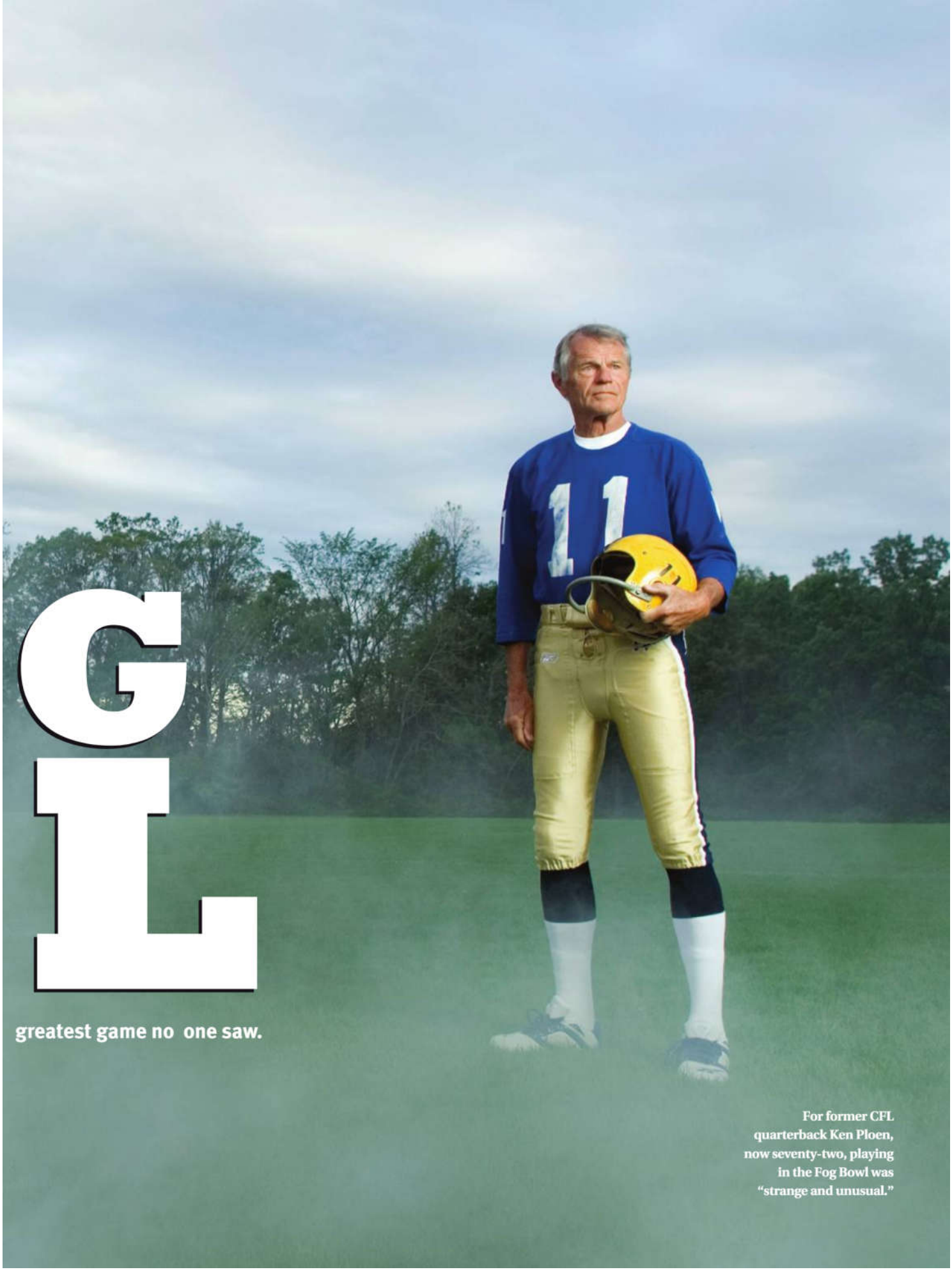


THE FO BOW

As the Canadian Football League celebrates its ninety-fifth Grey Cup, the 1962 title tilt stands out as the

by dylan g. dylan

THOMAS FRICKE



GL

greatest game no one saw.

For former CFL quarterback Ken Ploen, now seventy-two, playing in the Fog Bowl was "strange and unusual."

It's Grey Cup eve in Toronto and the streets teem with loyal followers of Canadian football. They spill out of bars, proudly upholding the Canadian Football League tradition of making merry into the wee hours before the big game.

And a big game it is — the fiftieth anniversary Grey Cup at Toronto's Exhibition Stadium features a pair of arch-rivals, the Hamilton Tiger-Cats and the Winnipeg Blue Bombers.

Yet, on this Friday night — November 30, 1962 — Canada's largest city, and indeed, much of southern Ontario, takes on an air of impenetrable gloom. A blanket of fog three storeys high is creeping eerily in off Lake Ontario, shrouding the entire region. The brume paralyzes communities from Windsor to Kitchener, causing four deaths, and bringing rail, air, and road traffic to a standstill. Driving is so dangerous that even police are ordered off the road, except for emergencies. Criminals, however, are under no such compulsion. Hidden by the haze, they go on a crime spree.

CP PHOTOS

The Winnipeg Blue Bombers and Hamilton Tiger-Cats play at Toronto's Exhibition Stadium during the 1962 Grey Cup.

"[The fog] must have given them [the criminals] courage when they thought they couldn't be seen," Toronto Deputy Police Chief George Elliot would later tell the *Toronto Daily Star*.

All of this provided a murky backdrop to the Grey Cup, leaving many fans and players wondering whether the game would go ahead.

"It was strange and unusual, that's for sure. We weren't certain what was going to happen," recalls Ken Ploen, a principal player in what has since become known as the Fog Bowl.

Now seventy-two, Winnipeg's former star quarterback/defensive back jokes that his memory of the game is "kind of foggy at times."

Foggy. How appropriate....

In the CFL of the 1950s and '60s, victories were still earned on real grass, under open skies, rendering the game defenceless against the whims of nature. This made for some entertaining championship games. Over the years, fans have been treated to the Mud Bowl (1950), the Wind Bowl (1965), the Ice Bowl (1977), the Rain Bowl (1982), the Snow Bowl (1996), and, of course, the Fog Bowl of 1962.

The fiftieth Grey Cup game was the fifth instalment in a heated, sometimes bitter six-year feud between coach Bud Grant's Bombers and "Jungle" Jim Trimble's Tiger-Cats. Hamilton captured the 1957 Grey Cup, only to lose to Winnipeg in '58, '59, and '61.

"Yeah, it was a pretty good rivalry," Ploen recalls, mildly understating the case.

The Ticats' coach fuelled the fight considerably when, in a snippet of pre-Cup prattle in 1958, Trimble predicted of Winnipeg: "We'll waffle 'em. We'll leave 'em with lumps on the front and the back." When the Bombers emerged victorious that year, one Winnipeg radio station responded to Trimble's bombast with a parody of the Kingston Trio hit *Tom Dooley*:

Hang down your head, Jim Trimble,
Hang down your head and cry.
You know the Bombers beat you,
Now eat your humble pie.

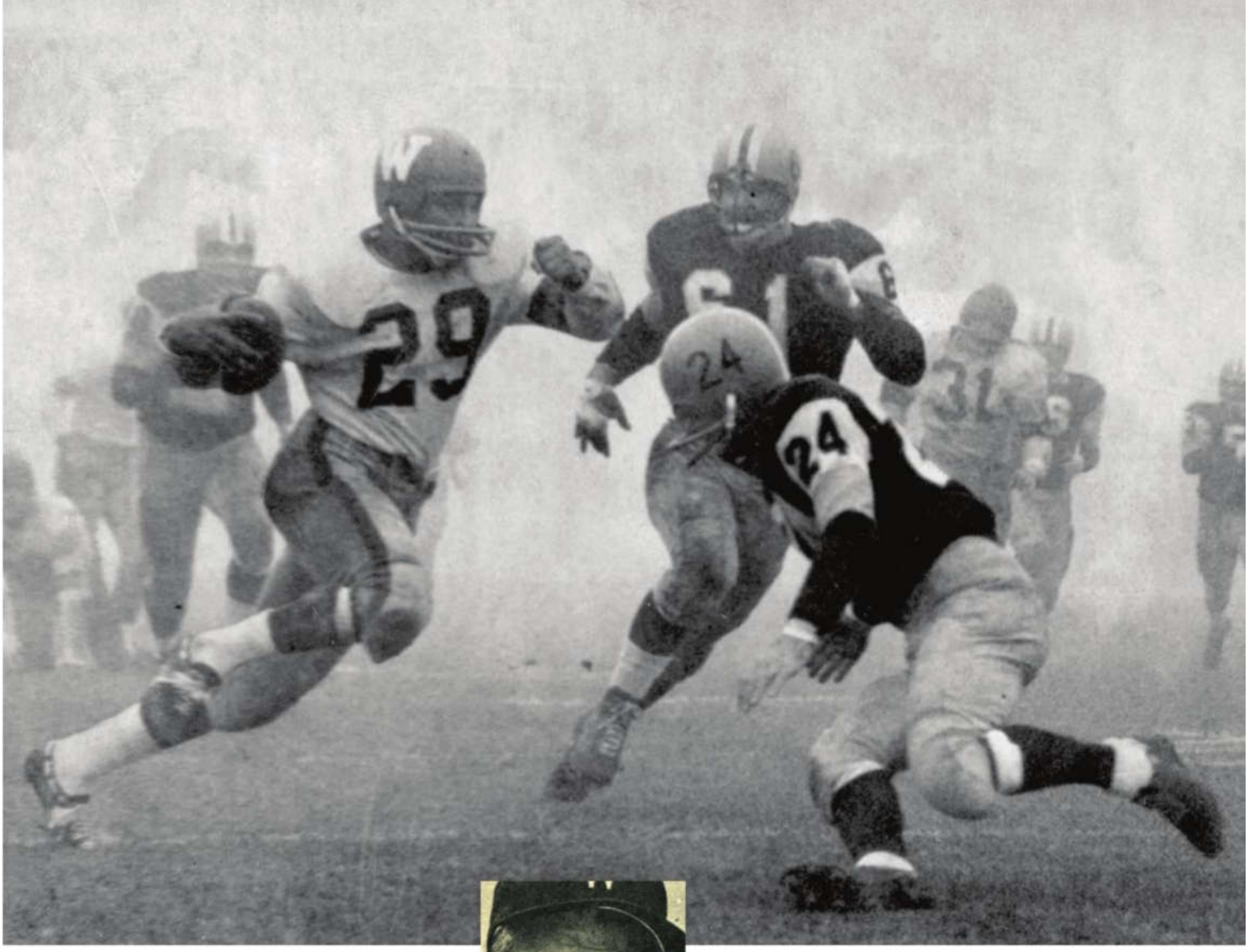
Despite the Bombers' past dominance, oddsmakers in 1962 made the Ticats six-point favourites. The Bombers were limping into the Grey Cup with an injury-depleted roster, the residue of an outrageously demanding playoff schedule that required them to battle the Calgary Stampeders three times in eight days in a best-of-three Western Conference final. Such a draconian requirement would be unthinkable today, but at the time the Eastern and Western conferences had different playoff formats. With Winnipeg barely able to field a full squad, Trimble once again bragged to reporters that a Hamilton victory was in the bag. And once again, Trimble's trash talk lit a fire under the Bombers. "How were we supposed to feel when the man said he could whip us and Calgary on the same day?" Bombers' defensive end Herb Gray told the *Star* after the game.

HAMILTON COACH JIM TRIMBLE

WINNIPEG TRIBUNE COLLECTION, HELD BY MANITOBA ARCHIVES & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Emotions ran high on both sides as they awaited the scheduled kick-off at one o'clock Saturday afternoon. However, with the fog continuing to roll in off Lake Ontario, the game itself was in doubt until a late-morning inspection of Exhibition Stadium by G. Sydney Halter, the CFL commissioner. The mist appeared to be lifting and Halter made his fateful decision. "The stadium was

CP PHOTOS



BOMBER COACH BUD GRANT

clear when we made the decision at 11:00 A.M.," he would later say. "We had no alternative [but to play]."

In the Bombers' locker room, everyone was excited and eager to play. Even injured players begged the coaching staff to be let back on the field. For those who couldn't answer the call, their teammates stepped into the breach. John Michels, the offensive line coach of the Bombers, later described the scene in post-game interviews: "You know there wasn't a dry eye when we came out of the dressing room Saturday. Gordie Rowland was sitting in the corner of the room, crying because he couldn't play and every man on the squad went over and told him they would win it for him. You just knew Hamilton was going to catch hell."

The fog wasn't a factor in the first quarter, but by the second quarter the pitch was fading from sight. The thick mist made for some comic moments. At one point, Prime Minister John Diefenbaker got up for a bathroom break and almost walked into a female facility. (The media poked fun at the PM following the game, declaring in a front-page *Star* story: "The prime minister couldn't even find the men's powder room — with a search party.") Diefenbaker took the miscue in stride. "I almost made the women's washroom, under escort," he later cracked to reporters.

Ploen started the game at quarterback. He recalls the fog not being that bad on the field. "On punts and long passes you might lose sight, but if you ran the ball it was possible to get things done," he said. Then again, he was in the thick of the action. From the fans' viewpoint, the game was devolving into a confusion of shadows and grunts. They couldn't see some of the remarkable activity unfolding beneath the shroud of grey, including a trick play known as a flea-flicker pass between Farrell Funston and Leo "The Lincoln Locomotive" Lewis that resulted in a touchdown.

Mike Hanley, who photographed the game for the *Hamilton Spectator* and would later go on to become a Tiger-Cats beat reporter, says the game was one of the "wildest and weirdest" of his career. "I was patrolling the sidelines, trying to photograph a game

Winnipeg's Leo Lewis (29) runs the ball as Hamilton defenders go for a tackle, Players lost sight of long passes and punts, and from the stands the game was quickly devolving into a confusion of shadows and grunts.

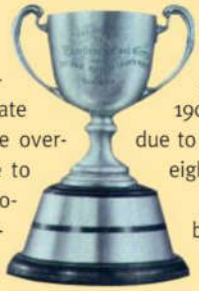
WINNIPEG TRIBUNE COLLECTION, HELD BY MANITOBA ARCHIVES & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

TEMPEST IN A GREY CUP

The game was over. The University of Toronto Varsity Blues had just dispatched the Toronto Parkdale Canoe Club 26-6. Now it was time for the champions to collect their prize — the newly minted Grey Cup.

Oops.

Unfortunately, when then-Governor General Albert Henry George Grey decided to donate a trophy to Canada's best football team, he overlooked one detail: to commission someone to actually make the Grey Cup. Yes, the now-storied chalice was a no-show for its own baptism on December 4, 1909. It wasn't until three months later that the U of T received its trophy. The oversight became a quirky footnote in CFL history.



As it was, Grey had not originally intended his cup to celebrate Canadian football supremacy. He wanted his cup to go to Canada's amateur senior hockey champions, but Sir H. Montague Allan beat him to it. (The Allan Cup is now given annually to Canada's AAA men's hockey champs.)

Today, the Grey Cup is the second-oldest North American professional championship trophy, after the Stanley Cup. This season marks the ninety-fifth year of the CFL's championship game. (While the first game was played in 1908, competition was suspended for three years due to the First World War.) Originally priced at forty-eight dollars, it is now worth in excess of $50,000.

Over the decades, it has been beaten and broken, pilfered and abandoned, held for ransom and held together with tape. The cup suffered its most recent affront after the 2006 championship between the B.C. Lions and Montreal Alouettes in Winnipeg, snapping at the neck during the post-game party.

It has since been welded back together and will be on hand in Toronto this November for the ninety-fifth Grey Cup game. **— d.g.d.**

I couldn't see," he recalls. "It was scary at times, listening to footsteps stampeding toward the sideline, but not knowing if safety could be found by dashing to the left or the right."

The game itself was a to-and-fro tussle, with the Ticats and Bombers at each others' boot heels the entire game. All the while, millions of television viewers on both sides of the Canada-United States border stared squinty-eyed at their black-and-white TV sets, adjusting their rabbit ears to no avail. To an American audience, the Canadian game, with its three downs, extra player per side, and wider, longer field, would in itself have been an odd spectacle. ABC's broadcasting team didn't help matters, telling its U.S. audience in the pre-game show that Toronto was situated on Lake Erie (it's actually on Lake Ontario) and failing to recognize Ploen, Winnipeg's star quarterback, while announcing the starting lineup.

By the fourth quarter, Halter, the CFL commissioner, had seen — or rather, hadn't seen — enough. The players were dispatched to their changing rooms while officials discussed what to do next. Both teams were battered and bruised, but the Bombers — at this point leading 28-27 with 9:29 to go — had more to lose by postponing the game. Many of their players were crippled by injuries. Even Ploen had been shifted from quarterback to defence to bolster the lineup.

In contrast, Hamilton's players were still feeling relatively fresh, and Trimble was lobbying Halter to spot Winnipeg a one-point lead and replay the entire contest the following Saturday. Grant, the famed Winnipeg coach, was desperate to avoid that outcome. He feared his wounded players would run out of steam. "Why do you think we wanted to finish the game in the fog Saturday?" Grant would later say to reporters. "We didn't have much left."

After twenty tense minutes of debate, Halter emerged to deliver his directive: The game would be adjourned until the next day, at which time the teams would battle for the remaining 9:29 of the fourth quarter.

The fans couldn't believe it. Boos and catcalls erupted from the bleachers. "Well, that's just great," one Blue Bombers loyalist grumbled to the *Star*. "It cost me several hundred dollars to see this game and I've got to go back to Winnipeg tonight without seeing the end of it." Others, like Bill Scully of Scarborough, Ontario, rejoiced. "That fog was a bonus," Scully told the *Star* following Saturday's contest. "Now I can take my boy — some fans from Montreal had to go back and gave me three extra tickets." As 32,655 fans began a slow, perilous procession from the stadium, Toronto police were called in to direct traffic. Red accident flares illuminated the haze. Nerves were frayed and frustration pierced the gloom.

In the Bombers' locker room, the dissatisfaction was as gripping as the fog. "We didn't think it was going be called off," Ploen recalls. "We sat in the room, then … it was pretty disappointing. You know, you've got to unstrap the pads, untape … you wanted

to finish what you had started. It was psychological more than anything. You've thrown everything you had into it, and now they're telling you that you had to come back the next day to play nine minutes and change. And the results showed the next day."

The Sunday crowd was sparse, with less than half bothering to return for the finale. The final minutes were anticlimactic. Winnipeg jealously protected its one-point advantage while Hamilton's offence was thwarted by bad penalties. Ploen ended up being the last man to touch the ball, diving down to retrieve a Joe Zuger punt just outside the Winnipeg goal line as the clock ticked down. A sixty-minute game that took twenty-four hours and forty-five minutes to complete ended in a 28-27 victory for the Bombers.

Trimble, the Hamilton coach, was furious with the refereeing, calling it "simply preposterous." His Ticats had racked up thirty-five yards of penalties in little over nine minutes of play. The team's president, Jake Gaudaur, was equally appalled. "It wasn't the right way to decide a national championship," he later snarled to reporters. "I know it sounds like sour grapes, but it wasn't fair to either team."

Fair or not, the Bombers were hailed as heroes at home.

"Throughout Saturday's fog-shrouded drama," wrote Hal Sidgurdson in his *Winnipeg Free Press* column, Pigskin Parade, "the Big Blue kept coming back when they should have been finished, kept getting stronger when they should have been weakening."

In Winnipeg, the city threw a party to honour the team. Manitoba Lieutenant Governor Errick Willis called Grant the best coach in Canada, adding, "He has what it takes to make a rabbit spit in a bulldog's eye."

Whether the game should have been suspended is still the topic of debate. Certainly, the fans couldn't see the action on the field. The *Star* later summed up the game as "something that looked like blue and black flies chasing each other in a bottle of milk."

"Looking back," Ploen says, "the right [decision] was made. The fans up high in the stadium and those watching on TV just couldn't see. If nobody can see the game...."

And that sums up the Fog Bowl: The greatest game nobody saw.

dylan g. dylan is a freelance sportswriter living in Victoria.

Et Cetera

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WORKING-CLASS HEROES

COURTESY OF KEN PLOEN

Quarterback and family man Ken Ploen at home with his wife Janet and three children.

The term "working-class hero" is something of a cliché, but in the 1960s it aptly described the players of the Canadian Football League.

Most held down full-time day jobs during the week, heading for the gridiron for practice after dinner. Weekends were reserved for games.

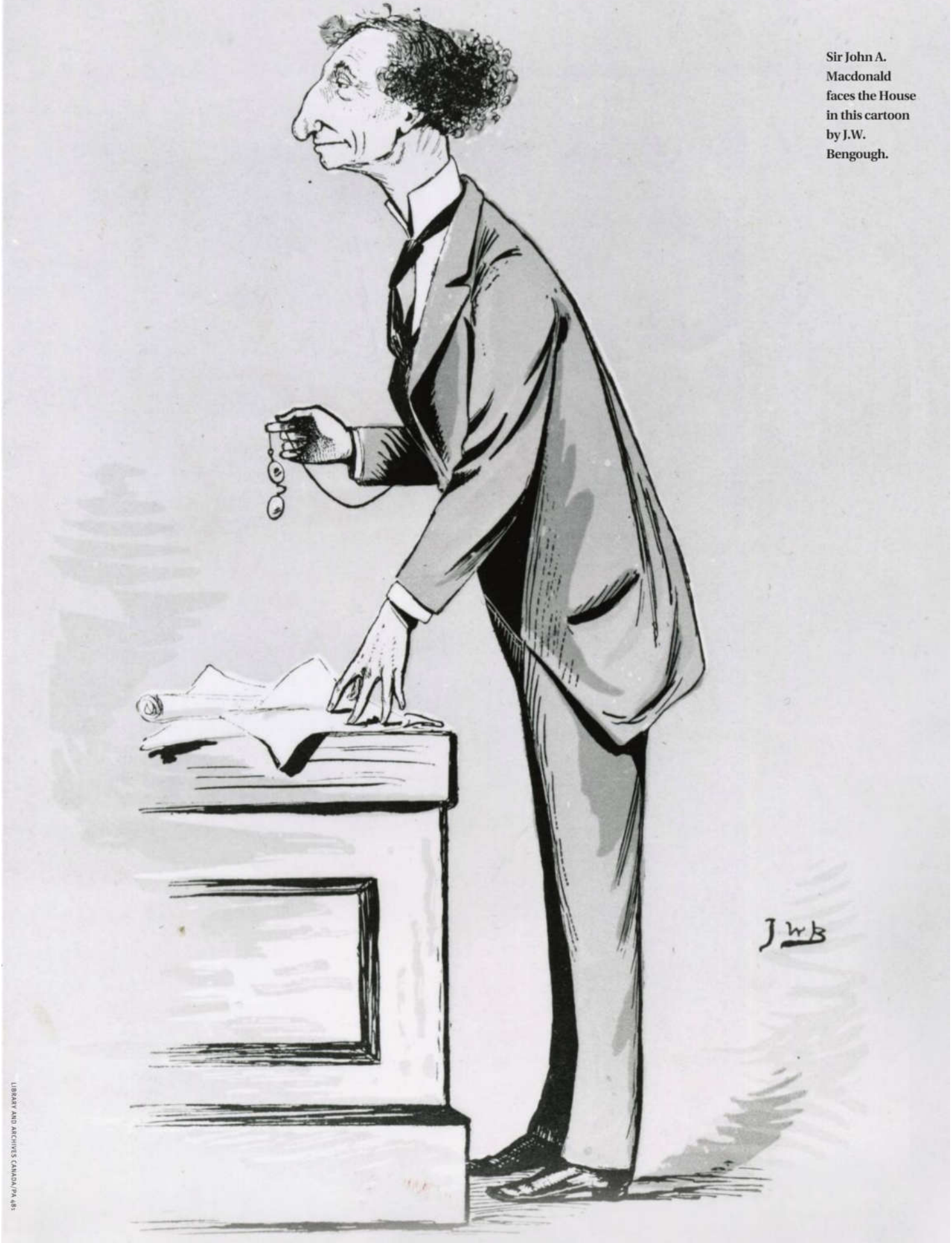
"One of the benefits of coming to the CFL was that you could pursue a business career," says Ken Ploen, an all-star quarterback who captured the Grey Cup four times. "That was the big thing. We practised at 6:30 at night, so we could hold down full-time jobs during the day."

Ploen spent eleven seasons with the Blue Bombers, all the while holding down a second job at MacMillan Bloedell. "If you had a road trip," said Ploen, "the companies were understanding and accommodating. They'd give you the time off so you could play the game. It worked out real well."

Ploen wasn't alone — his teammate, lineman Cec Luning, was known as the Selkirk Milkman. There's nothing like winning the Grey Cup one day and driving a milk truck the next. Many of the league's biggest stars did double duty. Russ Jackson led the Ottawa Rough Riders to three Grey Cup titles and was thrice anointed the CFL's most outstanding player. All the while, Jackson was teaching mathematics full-time. **— d.g.d.**

SIR JOHN A.'S LOST WEEK END

With his enemies circling and the Pacific Scandal mounting, Canada's first prime minister vanishes. by Peter Black



Sir John A. Macdonald faces the House in this cartoon by J.W. Bengough.

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Weather reports say Sunday, August 3, 1873, was a balmy morning, the kind that had made the Rivière-du-Loup area on the south shore of the St. Lawrence River in Quebec famous for its healthful benefits and restorative powers. Yet, given his state, Sir John A. Macdonald may have been completely oblivious to the glory of the morning as he rose in his modest rented farmhouse and gazed north across the river to the steep Charlevoix shore.

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA/PA 34029

Sir John A. Macdonald in 1878, the year after his re-election.

He would have been careful not to wake his wife Agnes, nor their three-year-old daughter Mary, whose debilitating condition seemed to improve in the maritime climate. Perhaps only his faithful messenger Ben Chilton would have heard Macdonald stir that morning. It was Chilton who would have fetched from the nearby Grand Trunk Railway station the previous day's newspapers, containing more stories about the Pacific Scandal, as the affair was then known, including reports of a large demonstration Macdonald's enemies were organizing in Montreal the next day to denounce government corruption.

Maybe no one detected the stealthy closing of the door as the prime minister of Canada stole out of the house and made his way onto the leafy lanes of St. Patrick, the village on the western outskirts of Rivière-du-Loup. He may have been staggering somewhat; his head, more accustomed to a forthright posture of charming cockiness, would have been lowered by profound despair, as the forces of doom closed in on him. In reflecting back, his mind weakened by fear, stress, and drink, a certain telegram he had dispatched the previous August would have haunted him: "I must have another ten thousand — will be the last time of calling. Do not fail me; answer to-day."

That damning bit of extortion had now been exposed publicly, along with mountains of other evidence linking him to the Pacific Scandal. Macdonald was cornered, with scant hope of salvation. So, on that fine August day, the first prime minister of Canada fled, and for the next few days no one knew where on earth he was — or they did and weren't telling. Thus began what might be called Sir John's "lost weekend."

Sir John's fugue, while mentioned in various histories and biographies, remains a confusing and contradictory incident. Even the most recent addition to the sizable Macdonald bibliography, Patricia Phenix's fascinating *Private Demons: The Tragic Personal Life of John A. Macdonald*, while adding some details, reverts to Donald Creighton's brief speculation on the incident. In *The Old Chieftain*, the second volume of his biography of Macdonald, Creighton cites correspondence between Lord Dufferin, who was then governor general, and Lord Kimberley, the British colonial secretary. Creighton writes: "For a few days at least he [Macdonald] lay, as Dufferin later informed Kimberley in horrified tones, '*perdu* with a friend in the neighbourhood of Quebec.'"

THE FIRST PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA FLED, AND FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS NO ONE KNEW WHERE ON EARTH HE WAS.

GRIP PRINT. AND PUB. CO., 1886./TORONTO: P. MARTIN ASSOCIATES, 1974

Shortly after Prime Minister John A. Macdonald was accused of corruption in the House in 1873, Parliament was adjourned for a summer break. *The Grip*, J.W. Bengough's humorous political publication, pokes fun at the feelings of the opposition, represented here by Liberal Leader Alexander Mackenzie, during this "vacation."

"AFTER THE SESSION; OR, 'THE SITUATION.'"

J. A. M—C—D—N—LD.—"COME ON, OLD FELLOW, IT'S ALL RIGHT, YOU KNOW; IT'S MY TURN TO TREAT!"

A. M—K—NZ—E.—"OH, AYE, JONEY! BUT Y'MAUN RECOLLEC' I'M TE-TOTAL—MORE ESPEECIALLY TILL AUGUST!"

SIR JOHN SURRENDERS HIS SWORD.

GRIP PRINT AND PUBLISHING CO., 1886 / TORONTO: P. MARTIN ASSOCIATES, 1974

WHATEVER DESPAIR MACDONALD MAY HAVE BEEN FEELING MUST HAVE BEEN DARKENED TO NO END BY RELENTLESS ALCOHOL ABUSE.

Perdu: lost, escaped, hiding, broken. Dufferin's revelation would seem to compound the riddle. What's more, Macdonald's disappearance prompted reports that the prime minister had attempted suicide by jumping into the St. Lawrence River.

The closer one examines the incident, the more it becomes apparent that historians have not completed the puzzle, either because some key pieces are forever lost or just too difficult to find. It is also possible Macdonald never gave a full account of his actions, and no researcher has uncovered testimony of direct witnesses — the "friend" with whom Sir John was *perdu*, for example. In a life as meticulously documented as Macdonald's, this gap at a crucial time in his career — and, more importantly, during one of the most dire political crises in Canadian peacetime history — is conspicuous. If a latter-day prime minister pulled such a stunt, surely in no time the media would have clogged tree-canopied St. Patrick on a twenty-four-hour stakeout.

But Macdonald, as far as we know, was not observed as he left his country house. He isolated himself, a Canadian King Lear, alone with tormenting reflections on how he, the man who had been on top of the world with the creation of Canada, had fallen into such a seemingly hopeless, sordid mess. Inevitably, foremost in Macdonald's swirling thoughts would have been the elaborate Montreal funeral for Sir George-Étienne Cartier, who had been his Quebec lieutenant. Cartier had died just three months earlier in London, where he had gone to seek treatment for Bright's disease, a cruelly painful and disfiguring kidney malady, nowadays quite treatable. Macdonald later confided to his trusted personal secretary, Sir Joseph Pope: "I loved him when he was living; I regretted and wept for him when he died.... But for him Confederation could not have been carried." Reports on Cartier's funeral say Macdonald was barely functional from sorrow and being "on the burst," as was the quaint period expression for a drinking binge.

Macdonald's grief for Cartier, though, would have been tempered with a grudge: But for Cartier and his backroom deals with shipping tycoon Sir Hugh Allan, Sir John would not have been in such a nightmarish quandary. With Cartier conveniently dead, it was up to Macdonald to explain the cash-for-contract pact Cartier had made with Allan.

Macdonald faced possible personal ruin and even prosecution on corruption charges. At 58, he seemed condemned to end his days in disgrace and in a desperate struggle to pay the bills and support a household that included his disgruntled wife Agnes, twenty years her husband's junior, and his toddler daughter, who was afflicted for life with hydrocephalus and mental retardation.

Whatever despair Macdonald may have been feeling must have been darkened to no end by relentless

alcohol abuse. Creighton paints the picture of Macdonald's July in Rivière-du-Loup: "The days passed drunkenly with the black depression of awakening consciousness alternating with the muddled forgetfulness of stupor." Dufferin notes in a letter to Kimberley, dated August 9: "To add to all my troubles, I learn that Sir John has been constantly drinking during the last month."

The evidence suggests Macdonald had hit the skid row of a boozing career that started in his teens, following the example of "Little Hugh," his convivial and hard-drinking merchant father. We can also assume that his drinking had become so bad that he no longer wanted to be observed — and judged — by Agnes, by his daughter, or by the small entourage of staff Sir John brought with him to St. Patrick. Even the village — the "small, smug, gossipy summer colony," in Creighton's words — would have exposed Macdonald to profound shame in his drunken condition.

And so, the story goes, Macdonald vanished. As to what actually happened, where he went, and what he did, the sole direct description historians have unearthed comes from the governor general, relying on an unknown informant. Here is Dufferin's full entry on the episode, dated November 6, 1873: "All the time I was at Halifax, at the very moment when our correspondence ought to have been most confidential, I could get neither an answer to my letter, nor even to my telegrams. No one — not even his wife — knew where he was. He had stolen away as I subsequently heard from his seaside villa and was lying *perdu* with a friend in the neighbourhood of Quebec."

Here we have the image of a deeply depressed Macdonald, possibly in a state of alcoholic dementia, stumbling his way to the Rivière-du-Loup station to take the morning train west. We do not know whether he was alone at this point or whether the "friend" to whom Dufferin alludes travelled with him. In those days, of course, prime ministers were not surrounded by aides, nor by a security detail, nor under intense media scrutiny, so it is quite possible Sir John snuck off alone.

If we accept the train-escape theory, Macdonald would have disembarked at Lévis, across the river from Quebec City. He would then have taken a ferry, and certainly would have been recognized in broad daylight by passengers on the busy crossing. Bruce Hutchison, in his chapter on Macdonald in his 1964 *Mr. Prime Minister*, seems to conclude that Sir John never made it across the river, but instead "lay unconscious in the stews of Lévis."

Assuming he made it to Quebec City, Macdonald most certainly would have been very familiar with its "stews." He had spent a great deal of time in the city over the years; it's likely he knew where to find a drink in a city teeming with bars.

We can certainly rule out one stop Sir John could have made. On August 4, the Mutual Temperance League's annual meeting took place at the Crystal Palace in Quebec City. A *Morning Chronicle* reporter complains "it is not every one who can drink unlimited quantities of lemonade, uncorrected with liquor." Certainly not Macdonald.

It seems more probable, though, given his morbid mood, that, as Dufferin suggests, Macdonald simply holed up at a friend's lodging and did not venture into the streets. That might explain the complete absence of any mention of a Sir John sighting in Quebec City newspapers that normally seized upon such juicy details.

Left page
Sir John A. Macdonald, whose fondness for drink was well known, would eventually make several amendments to the Canada Temperance Act that were favourable to the liquor trade, as indicated in this 1883 political cartoon.

QUEBEC ANGLOPHONE HERITAGE NETWORK

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Sir George-Étienne Cartier

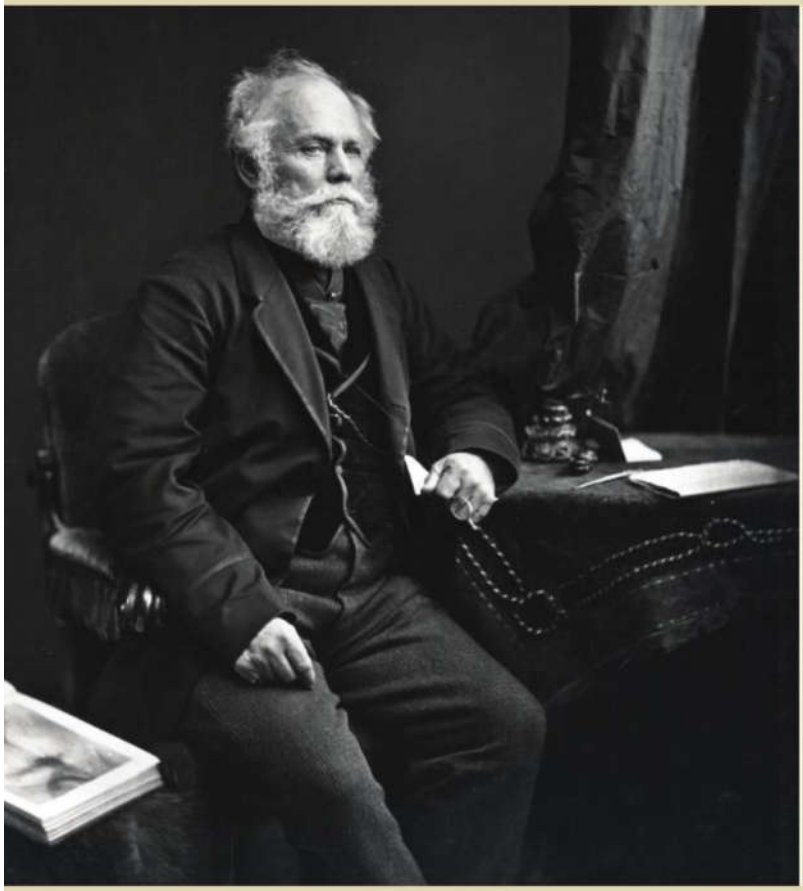
Wherever Sir John was, folks back in St. Patrick noted his absence, perhaps twigged by a husbandless Agnes in the family pew at church that Sunday morning. This shocking tidbit of information was obviously communicated to the city and gave rise to stories of Sir John's attempted suicide.

A key piece in the "lost weekend" puzzle is the report that appeared in the *Montreal Witness* on Monday, August 4: "SAD [*sic*] OF THE PREMIER — A telegram was shown to several gentlemen in the city this forenoon anent the doings of Sir John A. Macdonald, at Rivière-du-Loup. It stated that yesterday afternoon Sir John attempted to commit suicide by jumping from the wharf into the water. He was rescued, but now lies, it is asserted, in a precarious condition."

John A. Macdonald's rambling Victorian villa, Les Rochers, lies just south of Rivière-du-Loup. It now operates as a bed and breakfast.

The Pacific Scandal

Sir George-Étienne Cartier's political desperation planted the seed of the entangling plant that would become the Pacific Scandal. By 1872, Cartier, once the unchallenged leader in Quebec and John A. Macdonald's indispensable ally in the forging of a nation, had become gravely weakened both politically and physically. His east-end Montreal riding was in peril — in part from the political trickery and clout wielded by shipping tycoon Sir Hugh Allan. Allan wanted Cartier to grant him and his American partners the charter to build the Pacific railway that the government had negotiated with the colony of British Columbia as an incentive to join Confederation in 1870. Macdonald and Cartier were adamant that American interests not be involved in the project.



MCCORD MUSEUM I-6956.0/DETAIL

Rail baron Sir Hugh Allan in an 1871 portrait by William Notman.

In July, Macdonald agreed privately to let Allan be president of the company that would build the railway. This was not enough for Allan, who knew his American backers wanted more control of the project.

Days before the August 28, 1872, election, Cartier caved in. He said the government would be amenable to Allan being president of the railway corporation, the implication being that Allan's American friends would be cut in on the action. Cartier had also gotten Allan to agree to provide funds to the governing Conservatives for upcoming elections. Macdonald was horrified when he found out and immediately demanded Cartier rescind the deal, which he did, or at least Macdonald thought he had. By then, though, Allan's desperately needed money had begun to pour into Conservative party accounts. Macdonald, realizing it was too late to return the money, used it to avoid defeat at the polls.

Macdonald and the Conservatives pulled off a slim win in the 1872 election. Cartier lost his seat in Montreal and died a few months after.

Meanwhile, a rival railway consortium led by David MacPherson, who represented Toronto interests, was just as determined as the Montreal tycoon to secure the charter. Macdonald's solution was to merge the two consortiums, with Allan as president. Sir Hugh, though, was having none of it.

Macdonald eventually succeeded in convincing Allan to shed his American partners — or so he thought. Allan got the presidency and prepared to head off to Britain to round up investors. This did not sit well with one George McMullen, the Canadian-born front man for American capitalists. McMullen had invested huge amounts of time and plenty of cash from his American backers — who now stood to get little in return.

On New Year's Eve, 1872, McMullen approached Macdonald and threatened to go public with the scandal if Macdonald didn't allow the involvement of his American friend. To mollify him, Macdonald got his Montreal fixer, Sir John J.C. Abbott, to pay McMullen in an attempt to keep him quiet.

Things did not stay quiet.

On April 2, 1873, Quebec Liberals alleged in the Commons that Canadian government ministers, in exchange for large sums of money to aid in elections, had promised the contract for the Pacific railway to Sir Hugh Allan. A week later Macdonald set up a committee of parliamentarians to look into the allegations.

For the next few months, the Pacific Scandal bogged down in procedural wrangling. In early July, the exhausted prime minister fled to his riverside abode at St. Patrick. His repose would be brief.

On July 17, several newspapers published a long testimonial by McMullen in which he laid out his version of the railway affair. Also published were copies of correspondence providing proof of collusion between Macdonald and Allan. These documents came from Abbott's law clerk, George Norris, and his assistant, Alfred Cooper, who copied reams of explosive documents from Abbott's safe and sold them to the Liberals.

Sir John and his closest cabinet colleagues met in Quebec City and discussed damage-control measures. The parliamentary majority was slipping away as government MPs abandoned Sir John. He resigned in November and his government lost the election in January. The railway project itself — Macdonald's national dream and the key to Canada's future — was sidelined indefinitely.

Macdonald would get the last laugh, however. After being re-elected in 1878, he revived the railway project. It was completed in 1885.

The question of whether or not Macdonald actually tried to kill himself, like the mystery of his disappearance, has never been resolved. Most Canadian newspapers that week carried some report of the alleged incident, each varying in several details. All treated the rumour with astounding brevity and understatement, compared to the towering headlines such a tale would generate nowadays. The *Globe*, for example, on Tuesday, August 5, published a crisp update of the report in the *Witness*, saying that "according to some" Sir John may have suffered some misfortune "accidentally by bathing."

The next day's papers, though, reflected the political "spin" expertise of Macdonald's friends, not to mention the lack of enterprising journalism of the day. The *Globe* of August 6 wrote: "The sensation concerning the Premier is rapidly dying out under the influence of repeated assurances that the rumour was without foundation."

In any event, it appears Macdonald, whether he had been recovering from a near-drowning somewhere in St. Patrick, or nursing a massive hangover on the train from Lévis, was at home in Rivière-du-Loup by Wednesday, August 6. Sir Joseph Pope, Macdonald's biographer, offers this rebuttal of the suicide reports: "The whole affair was deliberately manufactured to feed the excitement which the publication of the McMullen correspondence, a few days before, had produced. The only notice Sir John took of this outrage was to dispatch reassuring telegrams to his relatives and intimate friends, one of which read, 'It is an infamous falsehood. I never was better in my life.'" Pope's version of events, based on Sir John's recollections fourteen years later, makes no mention of Macdonald's supposed disappearance and focuses exclusively on the suicide rumours.

Whatever actually happened between Sunday and Wednesday, we do know that by the end of the week Sir John had pulled himself together and, according to *Le Canadien*, "appeared in excellent health" when he stopped over in Montreal on his way to Ottawa. The *Daily Mercury* cheerfully reported on August 11, "The first minister looks extremely well after his few days relaxation at the seaside and seems well able to cope with the factionists [the Opposition] on the 13th."

Macdonald didn't cope that well with the "factionists," actually. Despite a stirring speech in the House of Commons defending his honour, Sir John's parliamentary goose was cooked and he was forced to resign on November 5. Dufferin asked Alexander Mackenzie to form a government and the Liberals won the election in January 1874.

Of course, with the benefit of hindsight, we know there is a happy ending for Macdonald despite this rather coarse patch in his long career. But in the fall of 1873, Sir John could well have been written off as an irreparably tainted entity — an able politician, but deeply flawed human being, who succumbed to his weaknesses.

We are left to ask: Had Macdonald been judged by today's standards of conduct for public figures, would his career have been finished in the fall of 1873? Clearly, Canadians back then were more forgiving (or ill-informed). After Mackenzie's Liberals stumbled, voters turned to the reinvigorated and always endearing Sir John in 1878 and thereafter kept him in power until the day he died at age seventy-six.

This cartoon by J.W. Bengough in *The Grip* from October 1873 portrays the slender chance John A. Macdonald has of staying in power after the corruption scandal rocks his government.

There is an ironic footnote harkening back to events in the summer of 1873. The man who succeeded Macdonald as prime minister upon his death in 1891 was the omnipresent J.J.C. Abbott — Conservative MP, one-time mayor of Montreal and lawyer for Montreal shipping merchant Sir Hugh Allan. It had been the incriminating documents purloined from Abbott's office safe that launched Sir John on his lost weekend.

Peter Black is a CBC Radio producer based in Quebec City. He is also a syndicated columnist on Canadian affairs and a freelance writer.

Et Cetera

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Medals of Honour

Canada's top war

COMMONWEALTH DECORATIONS

Victoria Cross

The premier wartime award available to all ranks of the British and Commonwealth forces. Simply inscribed "For Valour," it was first conferred retroactively on soldiers of the Crimean War in 1854. Created in 1856.

Distinguished Service Order

Originally for junior officers of the three services, but later amended to include senior officers for outstanding leadership. Merchant Navy officers were added in 1942. Created in 1886.

Military Cross

Created because there was no bravery award below the VC and DSO for junior and warrant officers at the outbreak of the First World War. Awarded for "gallantry during active operations against the enemy." Created in 1914.

Distinguished Conduct Medal

The need for a gallantry medal for warrant officers, non-commissioned officers (NCOs) and enlisted men was apparent during the Crimean War, so the DCM was struck and inscribed "For Distinguished Conduct in the Field." Created in 1854.

Conspicuous Gallantry Medal

Conceived as the naval counterpart to the DCM, it was awarded to petty officers and seamen of the Royal Navy and NCOs and men of the Royal Marines. Inscribed "For Conspicuous Gallantry." Created in 1855.

Military Medal

Awarded to NCOs and men of the army and to their Royal Flying Corps and naval counterparts for individual acts of heroism. Inscribed "For Bravery in the Field." Created in 1916.

CANADIAN DECOR

Victoria Cross

Identical to the British original except for the Latin inscription "*Pro Valore*" replacing "For Valour." The British version was discontinued in Canada in 1972. The revised Canadian version has not been awarded to date. Created in 1993.

MEDALS AND DECORATIONS: VETERANS AFFAIRS CANADA

decorations recognize the bravest of the brave. by George Pearce

ATIONS

Star of Military Valour

Second-highest decoration awarded to any member of the Canadian Forces, or to allies serving with Canadians, for distinguished and valiant service in the presence of an enemy. Created in 1993.

Medal of Military Valour

Awarded to any member of the Canadian Forces, or allies serving in conjunction with Canadians, for an act of valour or devotion to duty in the presence of an enemy. Created in 1993.

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No Greater Valour

Some Canadians have earned multiple medals for bravery in battle. Here are just a few of

It is often said that heroes are ordinary people who did extraordinary things. But in extraordinary times there are no ordinary lives.

Below are a few of the exceptional Canadians who showed extreme bravery on the battlefield more than once and were awarded multiple medals during their military careers.

Hugh Cairns

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HUGH CAIRNS (1896-1918)

Rank: Sergeant, 46th Battalion CEF (The Saskatchewan Dragoons), WWI
Born: Ashington, Northumberland, England
Awards: Victoria Cross, Distinguished Conduct Medal, Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur (France), Croix de Guerre (France)

Hugh Cairns came to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, in 1911 at age fourteen, three years before the outbreak of World War I. He enlisted in 1915 and showed incredible bravery during the battle of Vimy Ridge, resulting in the award of the Distinguished Conduct Medal.

After nineteen months of trench warfare in unimaginable conditions, Cairns again proved his mettle. At Valenciennes, France, on November 1, 1918, he was cited for conspicuous bravery when a machine gun opened fire on his platoon. His immediate action in single-handedly rushing into direct enemy fire resulted in his silencing three machine guns, killing seventeen enemy soldiers and forcing about fifty to surrender after capturing all their guns.

Next, he joined a battle patrol and forced another sixty enemies to surrender. While disarming this party, Cairns was severely wounded, but he continued to inflict heavy losses on about twenty German infantrymen who rushed his position. He collapsed from weakness and loss of blood. Throughout the engagement he showed the highest degree of valour, and his leadership greatly contributed to the success of the attack.

Cairns died from his wounds on November 2, 1918, and was awarded the Victoria Cross posthumously. He was also made a Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur and awarded the Croix de Guerre with bronze palm by the French government.

In 1936, the town of Valenciennes renamed one of its principal streets *L'Avenue du Sergent Hugh Cairns*. This gesture of gratitude to Canada is believed to be the first time such an honour was bestowed by any French town upon any Allied soldier below the rank of officer.

Raymond "Collie" Collishaw

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RAYMOND "COLLIE" COLLISHAW (1893-1976)

Rank: Lieutenant Colonel, Royal Naval Air Service, Royal Air Force, WWI; Air Vice-Marshall, Royal Air Force, WWII
Born: Nanaimo, British Columbia
Awards: Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Distinguished Service Order and Bar, Distinguished Service Cross, Distinguished Flying Cross, Croix de Guerre (France)

Raymond Collishaw was Canada's second-highest scoring fighter pilot of World War I (after the legendary William "Billy" Bishop) with sixty enemy aircraft to his credit. In 1916, he was accepted into the Royal Naval Air Service as a provisional flight sub-lieutenant after being rejected for enlistment in the Royal Canadian Navy. He became commander of the famous "Black Flight" was the first pilot to claim six victories in a single day and the highest scoring ace to fly the Sopwith Triplane.

His first decoration was the navy's Distinguished Service Cross (DSC), which cites recognition of his services on various occasions, specifically four actions in which he destroyed five enemy Albatross aircraft. He later earned the even higher Distinguished Service Order twice "for conspicuous bravery and skill in leading attacks against hostile aircraft."

Collishaw continued his service into World War II, attaining the rank of air vice-marshall.

SAMUEL LEWIS HONEY (1894-1918)

Rank: Lieutenant, 78th Battalion CEF (Winnipeg Grenadiers), WWI
Born: Conn, Ontario
Awards: Victoria Cross, Distinguished Conduct Medal, Military Medal

Samuel Honey enlisted in the 34th Battalion CEF as a private in 1915 and went overseas the same year after promotion to sergeant. After a

year as an instructor in England, he transferred to the 78th Battalion and embarked for France as part of the 4th Division of the Canadian Corps.

As a sergeant, he was awarded the Military Medal in January 1917 for bravery in trench raids. Three months later, at Vimy Ridge, he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for conspicuous leadership under fire after most of his company's officers were either killed or wounded.

As a result of his actions, he was promoted to lieutenant. On September 27, 1918, when all the other officers of his company became casualties, Honey took command. Advancing to take an enemy post, he came under heavy machine gun fire. Honey nevertheless rushed the position and single-handedly captured the guns and ten prisoners. After repelling four subsequent enemy counterattacks, he went out alone after dark, located another enemy position, and led his men to capture it, along with three guns.

Samuel Lewis Honey

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA C-093052/DETAIL

He died on September 29, 1918, the last day of his battalion's attack, leading his company with the same skill and daring as before. He was awarded the Victoria Cross posthumously for "most conspicuous bravery."

Maj. (Ret) George Pearce has been guest commentator for the CBC's annual Remembrance Day telecast from the National War Memorial in Ottawa since 1988.

Heroism and history

No one knows who awarded the first medal for military bravery. The earliest evidence dates back to the fourth century B.C.E., when Alexander the Great reportedly awarded Jonathan, the Jewish high priest, a gold button for gallant conduct in battle.

Alexander the Great

The Egyptians and the Romans both awarded their soldiers plaques of brass and copper for outstanding bravery.

Sir Francis Drake

The earliest British campaign medal appeared in 1588, when Queen Elizabeth I ordered the Armada Medal struck to commemorate Sir Francis Drake's defeat of the Spaniards.

Alexander Roberts Dunn

Since 1856, ninety-three Canadians have received the highest award for bravery under fire — the Victoria Cross. The VC was inspired by the reckless bravery of the Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava in the Crimean War. A Canadian, Alexander Roberts Dunn, was among those awarded the medal. Of the 1,356 crosses awarded worldwide to date, many were awarded posthumously.

Originally, awards of valour for Canadians came from the British system. The Canadian government discontinued the use of the British VC in 1972. In 1993, Canada created specific national military decorations, including a new Canadian VC. Canada's two official languages mitigated against the use of "For Valour," so the Latin translation "*Pro Valore*" was substituted — a decision criticized by some veterans.

CP PHOTOS

The Canadian VC has yet to be awarded. However, at least thirteen Canadian soldiers serving with Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry and the Royal Regiment of Canada have been awarded decorations for heroism in the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan. Three have received the Star of Military Valour and ten have been awarded the Medal of Military Valour. — G.P.

Et Cetera

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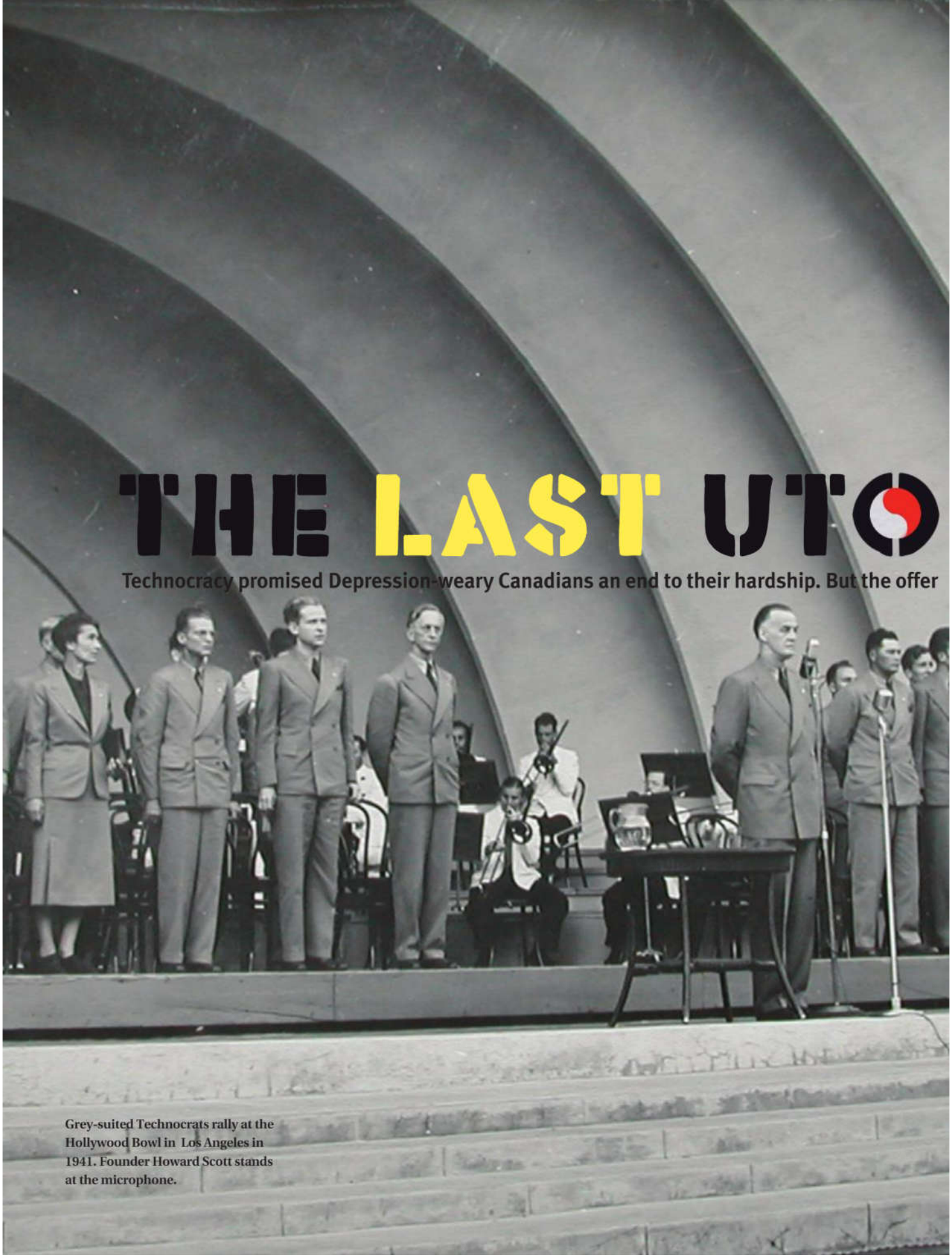

THE LAST UTO

Technocracy promised Depression-weary Canadians an end to their hardship. But the offer

Grey-suited Technocrats rally at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles in 1941. Founder Howard Scott stands at the microphone.

PLANS

came with a catch. by Ray Argyle

TECHNOCRACY INCORPORATED

The abandoned farms and empty streets of Depression-ridden rural Manitoba filled the view through the windows of the railway coach as Walter Fryers, a twenty-three-year-old university student, journeyed back to Winnipeg.

It was the fall of 1936 and Fryers had spent the summer trapping muskrats in the delta of the Saskatchewan River, working for little more than "board and a bunk." Now he was anxious to return to his science studies at the University of Manitoba.

During the long train trip from The Pas, the young student took to heart the dark reality of the dust bowl. It had been the hottest North American summer on record. Across the Prairies, dark clouds of dust rose off the drought-stricken land, burying livestock that lay dead and dying in the fields, and caking the faces of the hungry and haggard families who grimly trekked to the cities, leaving their devastated farms behind. Against this backdrop, Fryers pondered the failure of society to provide a better life for the millions impoverished by the Great Depression.

This continued to weigh on Fryers' mind after he arrived in Winnipeg, with its bread lines and its boarded-up businesses. Here, a chance encounter — spotting a poster for a lecture on something called "Technocracy" — was to rapidly change the direction of his life.

The lecture introduced the young man to a radical new doctrine that seemed to satisfy his yearning for a scientific solution to the world's problems. Technocracy's adherents claimed it would eliminate want by putting power in the hands of a capable few — not politicians, but an elite group of engineers and technicians, known as the Technocrats.

Within months, Fryers was himself preaching Technocracy's merits to the media. The *Winnipeg Free Press* gave front-page space to his declaration that the existing economic system was the root of the problem, because, in order for it to work, "a scarcity must be created and maintained. That is why, in a world of plenty, we have widespread poverty."

Technocracy flared like a comet in the darkness of the dirty thirties, promising to replace a collapsing capitalist system with a non-political government of scientists and technicians. It attracted thousands of members in Canada, survived a wartime banning, and enjoyed renewed, but brief, popularity after World War II amid short-lived fears that Canada might return to Depression-like conditions.

Of all the protest movements that flowered in the Depression, Technocracy was a unique creation. Largely overlooked by historians and neglected by most political scientists, the movement never elected an MP or fomented a riot. But to workers without jobs and farmers without crops suffering through the hungry thirties, Technocracy's proffered world of plenty seemed a utopian paradise: Unemployment would be a thing of the past and all would share equally in the abundance of the machine age. Sir Thomas More's sixteenth-century conception of a "happy island" stricken of all poverty and crime might at last become a reality, thanks to modern technology.

Founder Howard Scott's design for what he called the "Technate of America" did away with borders and merged the United

CHARLATAN OR PROPHET?

Technocracy founder Howard Scott was a 6-foot, 5-inch, broad-shouldered man with a magnetic (some said bombastic) personality. He was an engineer, though some questioned his credentials, and a habitue of New York's Greenwich Village. He attracted the support of many distinguished thinkers, including the economist Thorstein Veblen and Charles Steinmetz, the genius of General Electric. Given to wearing broad-brimmed felt hats and leather coats fitted for outdoor engineering jobs, Scott spent a decade devising the ideas behind Technocracy while running a think tank called the Technical Alliance. He identified at an early stage many of the issues of wasteful overproduction, environmental damage, and job displacement (whether by machines or globalization) being debated today. But he underestimated the ability of technology to create new jobs, such as the vast expansion that has occurred in the ranks of knowledge workers. And he proved unwilling or unable to put forward a concrete strategy to fulfill his utopian vision. The term "technocrat" has, over the years, slipped into common usage to describe a bureaucratic functionary, rather than an exponent of the new – and foreboding – social order Scott had foreseen for North America.

TECHNOCRACY INCORPORATED

Technocracy founder Howard Scott.

States, Canada, Mexico, and Central America into a single nation under a regime of engineers and technicians. Political parties, along with money and all the trappings of the present price-based economic system — which Scott saw as incompatible with the distribution of industry's output — would be things of the past. The economy would be based on energy (the capacity to perform work) and the new currency would be "energy certificates," qualifying every citizen to an equal share of the continent's wealth. People would work four hours per day, four days per week, between the ages of twenty-five and forty-five.

As originally conceived, there would be no democracy in the Technate — no elections, no parliaments — because, the Technocrats claimed, even in democracies, questions of fundamental importance are never submitted to popular vote. Instead, there would be a single disciplined organization under one jurisdiction that would be responsible for the smooth functioning of society. As John Darvill, the current head of Technocracy in British Columbia has since put it: "You don't get on a plane and vote as to whom should be the pilot." (Today's Technocrats, however, do propose democratic decision-making by referenda in non-technical matters.)

Adding to Technocracy's authoritarian approach, Scott had his followers wear grey suits and encouraged them to paint their cars Technocracy grey. He also devised an open-handed salute and adopted a symbol — the yin-yang, the ancient Chinese symbol representing balance — that he called a monad. Young people who were recruited were known as Farads — so named in honour of the English father of electricity, Michael Faraday.

In Canada, one of Scott's most enthusiastic advocates was Robert Cromie, the energetic publisher of the *Vancouver Sun*, who launched his newspaper as a platform for "liberalism." The two corresponded frequently. On October 31, 1935, Cromie wrote to tell Scott that, "Each letter that you send me, or each item that comes in, I devour." He added: "If you come to British Columbia we will work up a good crowd for you in Vancouver." Unfortunately for Scott, Cromie died suddenly on May 11, 1936. His sons, who took over the paper, had little interest in continuing their father's technocratic crusade.

Even without the *Sun*'s support, Technocracy spread quickly in Canada — although its strength here, as in the United States, was concentrated in the West. Eight chapters were soon organized in Vancouver, and the magazine *Technocracy Digest* was launched. Branches were set up throughout British Columbia, as well as in Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, Winnipeg, Hamilton, and Toronto. For many, Technocracy served as a fraternal organization. The *Winnipeg Free Press* reported on a 1940 technocratic wedding, noting the groom and his attendants wore Technocracy grey suits and "twelve men in Technocracy grey formed a guard of honour." In Vancouver, a Technocracy orchestra was formed.

There were scandals and tragedies, however. George Harrop, a director of the Winnipeg branch who had sold his grocery store to devote all his time to Technocracy, was found dead in his bed in March 1940, shot twice in the head. His wife, Frances, was charged with murder. She was

TECHNOCRACY INCORPORATED

This final issue of *The Technocrats'* Magazine is from 1933. The cover art is by renowned American illustrator Norman Saunders.

TECHNOCRACY INCORPORATED

acquitted on grounds of insanity on the day of the couple's twenty-fifth wedding anniversary.

The outbreak of World War II found Scott in Winnipeg predicting an economic collapse within four years. Speaking to an audience of fifteen hundred in October 1939, he also called for a referendum on "whether people wished the present price system to continue." By June 1940 — with the war in Europe going badly — the Canadian government suddenly announced the banning of Technocracy, along with a dozen other organizations, including Jehovah's Witnesses and the Communist Party. In the House of Commons on July 16, Prime Minister Mackenzie King defended the ban by saying one of the objectives of Technocracy was to "overthrow the government and the constitution of this country by force."

Walter Fryers, now ninety-four, remembers: "We were astonished when the RCMP padlocked our section premises and took records, furniture, everything. No charges were made." Other Technocrats were not so lucky. A Regina chiropractor, Dr. J. N. Haldeman, faced trial as a member of an illegal organization. He was acquitted. F.E. Demorest of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, was fined $25 for having paid for a newspaper ad protesting the ban. The conviction was overturned on appeal and, as far as is known, no other convictions were sustained. No evidence was presented that Technocracy had advocated violence and the ban was rescinded without explanation on October 15, 1943.

Scott believed that it was his plan of "total conscription" that led to the wartime ban. The government apparently took notice when he sent Technocracy delegates to a meeting of the Western Conference of Municipalities at Yorkton, Saskatchewan, on June 1, 1940. There, they presented Scott's scheme to conscript the continent's financial and economic resources, as well as its manpower. The ban followed shortly after that meeting.

The real reasons for the ban remain obscure to this day. Even now, more than sixty years later, some government files on the banning of Technocracy continue to be withheld from public view by Library and Archives Canada on the grounds that they could — according to Article 15 (1) of the Access to Information Act — be "injurious to the conduct of international affairs … or the detection of hostile activities."

Some hint of what wartime authorities may have been thinking comes across from S.T. Wood, commissioner of the RCMP at the time. In *An Unauthorized History of the RCMP*, by Lorne and Caroline Brown, Wood is quoted from an April 1941 issue of *RCMP Quarterly*. In it, Wood likened Technocracy and other banned groups to a "poison toadstool that sprang up overnight to destroy our social structure. Not until Christianity and democracy had been mightily challenged did the people realize [and then but slowly] the strength, multiplicity and deadly malice of their foes."

The end of World War II brought renewed concern that the North American economy — which had flourished to

By the 1970s, interest in Technocracy had declined considerably. People like director Don Clouse (shown here at a '70s-era rally in Los Angeles) worked hard to keep it alive.

feed the war machine — might plunge back into a depression. Technocrats quickly rebuilt, and on July 1, 1947, a caravan of 600 Technocracy cars rolled into British Columbia in "Operation Columbia." The convoy had begun in Los Angeles and timed its arrival for a speech in Vancouver by Scott. He filled the old Vancouver Forum with five thousand adherents, who had each paid a dollar admission and shouted Technocracy slogans. Reporter Charles King wrote in the *Vancouver Province* that Scott, speaking in a "bored, sleepy voice," attacked the press of the United States and Canada as "the most reliable source of misinformation in the world." Ten years later, with the postwar boom in full swing, the movement still managed to attract some adherents. One of them was John Darvill, who spotted a billboard in Vancouver advertising a lecture on Technocracy. "(I) thought it had merit but was skeptical to say the least," recalls Darvill, who was eventually won over after attending the Technocracy course of study.

Today, Darvill — a member of Technocracy's continental board, which operates from a rural property near Ferndale, Washington, that was purchased with a donation from a Canadian Technocrat — is one of only a few dozen Technocrats still active in Canada. He remains firmly convinced of its inevitability. Asked what he thinks is the future of Technocracy, he answers with a question: "What is the future for us all?" Darvill claims North America will have to adopt something like Technocracy "if we are to survive as a high-energy civilization."

THE RISE OF TECHNOCRACY

- During the Depression, Columbia University funds the Technical Alliance, a think-tank, to do an "energy survey" of North America.
- The survey concludes that technological advances are throwing people out of work, thus contributing to poverty in the midst of plenty.
- The report blames the system of money and prices, saying it relies on scarcity to operate.
- It proposes passing control of society from politicians and businessmen to a "technocracy" of engineers and technical experts.
- A barrage of publicity follows. Some 20 books on Technocracy are published within a year. Technocracy groups spring up.
- The Canadian government temporarily bans Technocracy during the Second World War.
- After a brief postwar revival, interest in Technocracy declines.

Ralph Rabb is equally convinced. Like Fryers, his views were deeply influenced by the Depression. On July 1, 1935, Rabb was a six-year-old boy accompanying his father to a labour demonstration in what became known as the Regina Riot. Rabb remembers running to and fro in the crowd as a youngster. "All of a sudden there was a huge roar," Rabb recalls. "Everything disappeared — all my landmarks — and I was lost." Rabb found himself in the middle of a violent clash between police and protesters that left one officer dead, dozens of protesters and officers wounded, and at least 120 people arrested. Rabb says that by the time his father found him, police had driven most of the two thousand or so demonstrators from the city's Market Square.

The boy grew up with a sense of justice undone, and twenty years later, as a steelworker in Hamilton, Ontario, he was an ardent member of Technocracy Inc., destined to become the closest Canadian confidant of founder Howard Scott.

Rabb is now long retired after a lifetime in the steel industry. He made more than a hundred visits to Technocracy's headquarters in the United States and was there when Scott died in Florida on January 1, 1970.

Rabb admits to some disappointment that the movement hasn't grown. He says he thought that by giving out information about Technocracy "something would happen, but few were interested. They only cared about their homes, getting a cottage, and so on. We were an educational organization. We weren't revolutionaries and we didn't put out any idea for the overthrow of any government. Now, we have an economy of planned waste — and war is the most efficient means of waste there is."

Some critics say that the movement failed to catch on in part because Technocracy's leaders did not put forward a concrete strategy to fulfill their vision. The initial flurry of interest during the Depression died down after the economy started to revive under U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, which put people back to work. And some dismissed Technocracy as too authoritarian and rigid.

Yet, Fryers remains a firm believer. A retired government meteorologist, he set up a Technocracy archive at the University of Alberta. He still thinks Technocracy "was and is on the right track. It has been generally misrepresented and misunderstood, but in a high-tech society like ours it will be necessary, eventually, to institute control by energy units instead of monetary units. Our body of thought is an enduring concept that may find its place in the near future."

Ray Argyle is the author of *Turning Points: The Campaigns that Changed Canada*, and of a forthcoming book on the ragtime era. He lives in Toronto.

Et Cetera

Technocracy and the American Dream: The Technocrat Movement, 1900-1941 by William E. Akin. University of California Press, Berkeley, California, 1977.

Technocracy Inc. website: technocracy.org.

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by John Wilson
To 15-year-old Jim Hay, war is a glorious adventure he can't wait to embark on. The reality of the French trenches soon dispels the myths and every day is a struggle to survive. Will the final outcome see him emigrate to Canada, or will some other tragedy befall him?
Suitable for teens. 198 pp. (Softcover)
Was $7.95, now $4

Booze: Distilled History
by Craig Heron
An exploration of Canadians' varied experiences with and shifting attitudes toward alcohol in this revealing richly illustrated book.
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Canadian Indian Cowboys in Australia
by Lynda Mannik
In 1939, eight aboriginal rodeo riders [with a RCMP officer chaperone] represented Canada at the Royal Easter Show in Sydney, Australia. Bringing together five perspectives of this unique event, the author explores identity as it is influenced through intercultural, social and power relationships.
194 pp., photos, endnotes, bibliography, and index. (Softcover)
Was $25.45, now $16

Canadians at Table:
A Culinary History of Canada
by Dorothy Duncan
Delve into the food, fellowship, and folklore of Canadian cuisine – a wonderful kitchen companion of anecdotes for your seasonal recipes.
248 pp. (Hardcover)
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Citizen of the World: The Life of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Vol. 1 (1919-1968)
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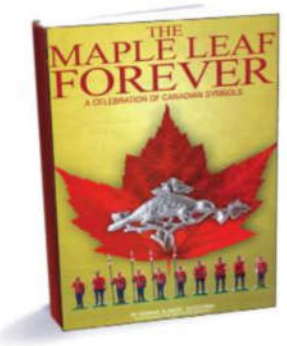

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by Kevin Shea and John Jason Wilson
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Telling Our Stories: Omushkego Legends and the History from Hudson Bay
by Louis Bird
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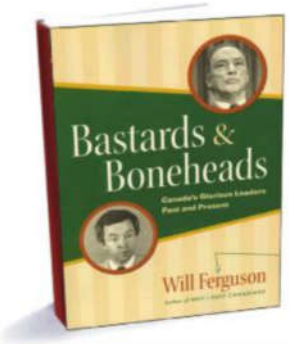

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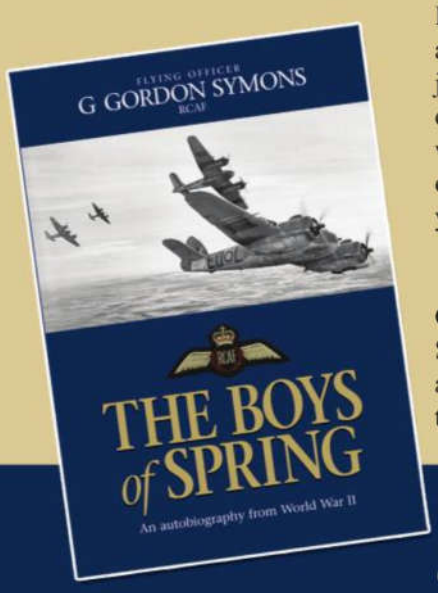

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G. Gordon Symons served on Royal Air Force 143 Coastal Command Anti-Shipping Squadron, flying Bristol Beaufighters and de Havilland Mosquitos against targets in and around the coastal waters of Norway, the North Sea, the Frisian Islands, and other German targets of opportunity.

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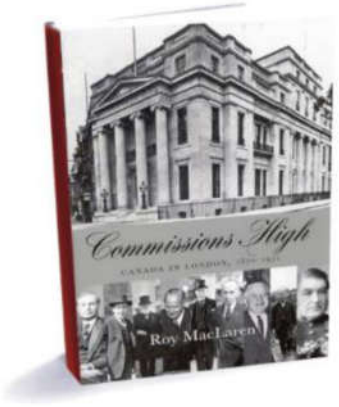
Reviews



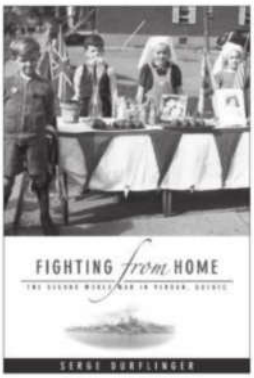
LONDON CALLING

Commissions High: Canada in London, 1870-1971
by Roy MacLaren
McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal and Kingston, 2006
584 pp., $49.95 hardcover

Roy MacLaren, Canada's high commissioner to London from 1996 to 2000, examines the office through the biographies of thirteen men who held the position, beginning with Sir John Rose, appointed in 1869 as the de jure high commissioner, and ending with Charles Ritchie, perhaps best known for his diaries, *The Siren Years* and others, published in the 1970s. For the first seventy-five years, all eight high commissioners had political influence with the Canadian prime minister of the day. For the next quarter century, from 1946 to 1971, the post was held more often than not by a career civil servant.

MacLaren's treatment of the period when Sir Charles Tupper and Sir Donald Smith (Lord Strathcona) were high commissioners is cursory, considering that between them the two held office for over three decades, from 1883 to 1914. He does, however, bring some interesting facts to light. During Tupper's thirteen years in office, for instance, he held two cabinet portfolios. When first appointed, Tupper was minister of railways and canals, and he was later minister of finance. He even returned to Canada to deliver a budget. Though it seems unusual today, at the turn of the last century it was thought that the Canadian high commissioner should be a cabinet minister so he could speak with authority on behalf of Canada.

The most puzzling aspect of Strathcona's term — from 1896 to 1914, the longest of any commissioner — was why successive prime ministers of different political parties left him in office. On becoming prime minister in 1896, Tupper, a Conservative, appointed Strathcona his successor as high commissioner. When Wilfrid Laurier, a Liberal, became prime minister, he did not make a new appointment to the post, as prime ministers usually do on change of government. Perhaps it was because Strathcona was a larger than life figure, a former MP, and had many good connections on the Liberal side of the House as well.



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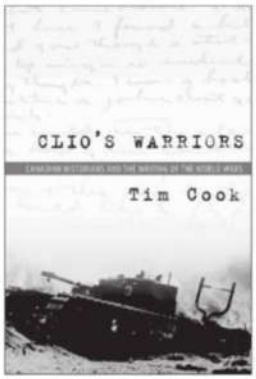

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Serge Durflinger

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– Desmond Morton, author of *Fight or Pay*

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Clio's Warriors
Canadian Historians and the Writing of the World Wars
Tim Cook

For an all-encompassing view of how our military's efforts have helped Canada become the nation it is, this work is a must read.
– Lieutenant Steven Dieter, *The Globe and Mail*

2006 | 496 pp | 22 b/w photos | paper $29.95

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MacLaren is dismissive of businessman Peter Larkin, who was William Lyon Mackenzie King's first appointment as high commissioner in 1922. Larkin's main qualifications for the post were his enthusiasm for ensuring that the prime minister was comfortable financially and his willingness to do nothing — which is exactly what King wanted done. Larkin's major contribution was the acquisition of Canada House in Trafalgar Square.

In spite of his own impeccable Liberal credentials (first elected to the House of Commons in 1979, MacLaren was minister of international trade from 1993 to 1996), the author clearly enjoyed the term of office of the bumptious former Tory premier of Ontario, Howard Ferguson, probably because, like MacLaren, he had a bias for action. Appointed by R. B. Bennett in 1930, Ferguson was not known as a diplomat. He was, however, highly respected by Lester Pearson, at that time a career public servant.

The most gripping chapter deals with the term of Vincent Massey, appointed to the office by Mackenzie King on the latter's return to power in 1935. Today, it may be jolting to read that Massey was transferred from the senior position in Washington to London, but in 1935 that was a promotion. The chapter delineates King's dislike of Massey partially because Massey was an activist, whereas King believed in a passive, do-nothing foreign policy.

MacLaren pays particular attention to Norman Robertson's first appointment as high commissioner in 1946. (He was appointed to a second term in 1952.) Robertson was a career civil servant who went on to become one of Canada's most respected appointees — and the first non-partisan — to the London posting. While MacLaren respects Robertson, it is clear that he thinks political appointments better facilitate access to the prime minister. When Robertson left London for the first time, he was succeeded by another career public servant just three years later, which implied that the office of high commissioner was becoming "more of a conventional diplomatic post."

A first-class diplomatic history, *Commissions High* is also a reflection on Canada's evolution as a nation. In 1870, high commissioner to London was the top external appointment in the Canadian service. By 1971, it was less important. This is partially because the British Empire has become less important in the world; but it is also because the policies of Mackenzie King, strongly supported by his trusted adviser O.D. Skelton, saw Canada rise from a colony of Great Britain to nationhood, only to descend again into colonial status with the United States as the new "mother country."

Reviewed by **Joseph E. Martin**, who is director of Canadian Business History at the Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto.

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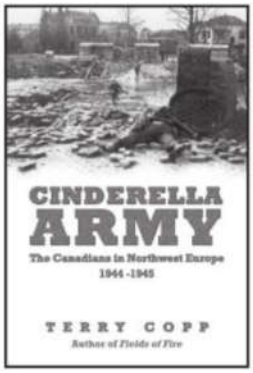

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Christopher Moore

Taking history to the streets

Urban activists are staking their claim on Canada's forgotten past.

I don't really have a bumper sticker that says, "We brake for plaques." But my beginnings in historical practice go back to the historic sites service of Parks Canada, so I've long been engaged with the way Time gets rooted in Place — and vice versa. It's not hard to get me to stop for any historical place.

My family, fortunately, aids and abets this enthusiasm. Over the years, we have explored historic sites and read historical plaques from Cape Spear, Newfoundland and Labrador, to White Pass Summit, Yukon.

This past summer, we did not venture far from home. But historical news is where you find it. One morning, in a Toronto neighbourhood not far from my own, I was stopped in my tracks by a poster with the headline "Teiaiagon."

I knew Teiaiagon. It was an Iroquois fortified town that briefly thrived in the mid-1600s on a headland commanding the Humber River on the west side of Toronto. But who cared enough about historical Teiaiagon to be slapping posters about it on postal boxes and power poles in the neighbourhood where it once stood?

The Missing Plaque project cared.

Toronto activist Tim Groves, the guiding spirit of Missing Plaque, first went out with "a steaming bucket of wheat paste and a roll of posters" in December 2002. He wanted to tell the Christie Pits neighbourhood of Toronto about the 1933 riot there that pitted swastika-waving Nazi sympathizers against the local Jewish community. In Groves' view, that is the kind of incident that goes "missing" from official, civic-booster historical plaques. His direct-action response to historical amnesia at Christie Pits became the first of fifteen "Missing Plaque" posters he has put up in various Toronto neighbourhoods.

CHRISTOPHER MOORE

The [murmur] collective offers up history on the spot — by cellphone. Passersby call the number on the [murmur] "plaque" to receive an unofficial story about what happened at the site.

"I don't have bureaucrats censoring and editing the histories to make sure they portray Toronto in a favourable light," Groves writes on the Missing Plaque website. His illustrated posters include such recently controversial topics as Toronto's bathhouse raids of 1981 and "Revenue Rez," a twenty-nine-day First Nations occupation of Revenue Canada's Toronto headquarters in 1994. But Missing Plaque also takes note of older events: an 1882 strike by women shoemakers, and ancient Teiaiagon. Groves has found a vehicle to combine his interests in graphic design, radical politics, and local history, and he's enriching our urban spaces at the same time.

Missing Plaque may be part of a trend. Along Montreal's "Main," the Boulevard St-Laurent, you can explore the history and culture of the neighbourhood through an elaborate network of art and information called "FRAG." FRAG has more official standing and sponsorship than Toronto's Missing Plaque, but it too was the inspiration of neighbourhood artists and urbanists. No doubt other initiatives I have not yet noticed document other half-forgotten moments across the country.

One group applies new media to the places where history happened.

The [murmur] collective spurns low-tech plaques and installations as positively twentieth century. It prefers history by cellphone.

In neighbourhoods around Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal, [murmur] puts up its logo and a phone number. You spot the logo, open your cell phone, and then input the number. Suddenly, you hear a story rooted in the scene that's right in front of you.

[Murmur] sites have blossomed in San Jose, California, Dublin, Ireland, and Edinburgh, Scotland, as well as the Canadian cities. But Shawn Micallef, one of [murmur]'s founders, thinks the inspiration was pure Toronto. "In Toronto, people think important things happen elsewhere. They don't mythologize Toronto. So we were reacting to that."

Asked if the [murmur] collective worries about accuracy and historical significance, Micallef says simply, "No." [Murmur], he says, is storytelling — it's local mythology. "We are not historical plaques. Plaques are important. They are official. If you disagree with the stories we've recorded, we'll let you record your own."

Accessing stories by cellphone is a long way from bronze texts on stone cairns, duly authorized by city council or the National Historic Sites and Monuments Board. But bronze, it turns out, is an endangered species anyway. The Toronto civic agency responsible for official plaques went missing after the mega-city amalgamation ten years ago and has never really got going again. And in Montreal the plaques are quite literally missing. A year ago, twenty-eight of the eighty-five commemorative plaques in Old Montreal were stolen for the value of the metal in them.

Some independent plaquing projects profess to confront a constraining "official" narrative of our history. Activists like Toronto's Tim Groves draw inspiration from urban organizing, radical politics, and street art. "Many of the people who do work around the city's history … focus on the history of the British and the rich," the Missing Plaque project declares, while it seeks the histories that Toronto denies.

I'm not so sure. It's true the alternative plaquers document much that is unlikely ever to be cast in official bronze. (Though not far from Missing Plaque's Teiaiagon poster, there's a substantial Toronto Parks panel on the same subject.) But the most important thing these projects offer is not their confrontation with "official" history. Many people won't know the official history either. Amnesia and apathy about history strike me as more substantial targets for creative citizens than some paper-tiger official narrative.

What the underground installation artists and poster makers really confront is that sense that history belongs to some official agency — or to no one. What's most exciting about FRAG, [murmur], and Missing Plaque (and all their siblings I've not discovered) is their faith that history belongs to all of us, to citizens. History in our neighbourhoods need not be left exclusively to public agencies. Historical speech really is a form of free speech. It has as much right to be political and provocative as any other medium.

All we need do is seize it. Or, where possible, dial it up.

Missing Plaque showcases its Toronto poster work at:
www.missingplaque.tao.ca
[murmur]'s audio tales can be heard at:
www.murmurtoronto.ca,
www.murmurvancouver.ca, and
www.murmure.ca
Montreal's FRAG is online at:
www.atsa.qc.ca/pages/fragsurlamain.asp

Christopher Moore comments in every issue of *The Beaver*.

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Mining Tourist Gold

Katherine McIntyre travels to Dawson City, where the streets echo with memories of fast times and the rush for riches.

It was once a First Nations fishing village located on a piece of swampy permafrost at the edge of the Yukon River. But then came the gold rush, and Dawson City became, for a while, the "Paris of the North."

The transformation began in August 1896, when local prospectors George Carmack, Dawson Charlie, and Skookum Jim Mason found gold in nearby Rabbit Creek (now named Bonanza Creek). When news of the discovery spread across the world, thousands of stampeders answered the siren call, heading north to make their fortune scrabbling for gold.

At the same time, slick entrepreneurs discovered an easier way to strike it rich. They opened sawmills and built casinos, dance halls, hotels, saloons, restaurants, and houses for the successful. By 1898, Dawson City had swollen into a ramshackle conglomeration of more than 40,000 miners and hangers-on, becoming the largest Canadian city west of Winnipeg.

But as miners found fewer and fewer flecks of gold in their pans, Dawson experienced a mass exodus. In 1899 alone, eight thousand people left Dawson City to seek their fortunes elsewhere.

Within a few years, Dawson City reverted into a Subarctic community of about two thousand residents, many haunted by memories of long-gone dancing girls and fast living. By 1960, Dawson claimed a mere three hundred and fifty residents.

With its wild and turbulent history behind it, Dawson City today mines for tourist gold. The city of about two thousand people draws close to 60,000 tourists each year — mostly from Canada, the United States and Europe. Parks Canada has restored the buildings that line the streets and painted their bright facades yellow, blue, or green. Their windows display the same items that might have been on display in their glory days. In former prospector Émilie Fortin Tremblay's high-end fashion store, for instance, a white cotton blouse with leg-of-mutton sleeves carries the overtones of luxury. A tin washtub sits in the window of Ruby's Place, once a combined laundry and brothel. Oak Hall displays general late-nineteenth-century merchandise. While some buildings lie empty and forlorn, enterprising craftspeople have turned others into boutiques or studios where they combine ivory from the tusks of ancient mastodons with gold, transforming them into unique pieces of jewellery.

Bombay Peggy's Inn and Tavern is one old house that didn't want to die. Standing vacant and sinking into a swamp, it attracted the attention of two enterprising Klondike women, Kim Bouzane and Wendy Cairns. These determined women met about fifteen years ago. "I was passing through at the time," Kim explains, "and Wendy was a dancer

A performer sings during the stage show at Diamond Tooth Gertie's Gambling Hall.

YG PHOTO

at Diamond Tooth Gertie's Gambling Hall." As they got the feel of the historic town — with its wooden sidewalks, dirt roads and historic buildings — the lure of the Yukon seduced them and they decided to stay. Together, they worked to restore the home's faded facade into an elegant Victorian-style inn — not an easy task in Dawson City, where building bylaws dictate that all renovations must conform to the total historic appearance of the city.

Dänojà Zho Cultural Centre (Long Time Ago House) tells the story of the original inhabitants of the area, the Han-speaking Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. The centre displays artifacts and photos that bring this First Nation, that lived by fishing the Dawson River, into perspective.

The Dawson City Museum provides dramatic explanations of mining and social history, and even tells why mastodons roamed the area thousands of years ago. Formerly the Old Territorial Administration Building, this National Historic Site is an impressive stone structure designed by Thomas W. Fuller — son of Thomas Fuller, the architect of Canada's Houses of Parliament in Ottawa — and built in 1901. Inside, an exhibit including the award-winning documentary *City of Gold* features author Pierre Berton recounting the gold rush era from a personal point of view — his father was a stampeder.

The story of Dawson also comes to life with a trip to Claim No. 6 on Bonanza Creek, about a kilometre downstream from where Carmack found the first gold nuggets in 1896. With only a pickaxe, shovel, and gold pan provided by the Klondike Visitors Association, anyone can try their luck — if they find gold, they can keep it.

Is there still gold left after the gold rush? Yolanda, our server at Klondike Kate's Cabins and Restaurant, points to six gold nuggets dangling from a chain around her neck. "There's gold — I found these on my own claim," she says.

At night — in the eerie glow of the midnight sun — the sparkling lights, the can-can girls, and the roulette tables at Diamond Tooth Gertie's beckon. Named after a dance hall queen who distinguished herself with a sparkling diamond wedged between her two front teeth, the hall rocks with the jangle of slot machines and the pounding honky-tonk beat of the musical extravaganza.

But nothing can compete with the natural beauty of the northern lights. By late August, when the sun drops below the horizon, the lights ripple across the night sky in shimmering greens, reds, purples, and blues. Then, in their mystical glow, Dawson City reverts to its ghostly past.

Dänojà Zho Cultural Centre. Exhibit includes a boat and fish drying on a rack.

96 PHOTO

Katherine McIntyre is a freelance writer who combines travel writing with Canadian history.

If you go...

MICHEL ROULEAU

Travel to Whitehorse from Vancouver or Edmonton by air or by driving the Alaska Highway. From there, take the Klondike Highway to Dawson City. You can also start from Skagway, Alaska, and take the Klondike Highway. To reach Claim No. 6, turn off the Klondike Highway and follow Bonanza Creek Road past Dredge No. 4 and the historic Discovery Claim. Watch for signs on the left hand side of the road — about fourteen kilometres.

Dawson City Tourism
Provides information on all attractions listed here.
W: DawsonCity.ca

Dawson City Museum
5th Avenue
T: (867) 993-5291
E: dcmuseum@yknet.yk.ca

Dänojà Zho Cultural Centre
Front Street
T: (867) 993-6768
E: culturalcentre@gov.trondek.com
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Your Story

A Presidential Fish Tale

Julia Tyrrell remembers the inconvenience of having an American president vacation on her doorstep.

Former United States president Franklin Delano Roosevelt was a life-long fan of fishing.

CORBIS

Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the thirty-second president of the United States, had been told that the best freshwater fishing in North America was in McGregor Bay (called "the Bay" by local residents), an Ontario summer cottage community situated at the north end of Georgian Bay.

So it was that at the height of World War II, with intense pressure on his shoulders, Roosevelt came to the Bay to fish during the first ten days of August 1943. He arrived by train at nearby Birch Island in a special car, which was parked, during his visit, close to the home of the local First Nations chief. The president lived in this railcar, but when he was fishing he used the yacht *Mizpah*, accompanied by two American gunboats. On all three boats, Mounties were visible in full uniform. On the two gunboats, heavily armed presidential security men wore shorts with no shirts — and most had pot-bellies.

Many Americans were holidaying at the Bay that summer and a lot of them were furious at the inconvenience created by their president's flotilla. A Mrs. Peebles, who usually flew both the United States and the Canadian flags at the end of her dock, was particularly upset — and with good reason. She lived on the shore of a channel, which the "fleet" passed through every day. The public had to be kept a prescribed distance from the president, so Mrs. Peebles was routinely chased off her dock by guards who aimed their big guns at her. One day, the story goes, she took a chair, a small table, and a big bottle of liquor to her deck, and turned the American flag upside down. When the boats arrived, she sat down and turned her back to the president — the big bottle and a glass on the table. One tale is that she drank the contents of the bottle while the flotilla passed; another is that the bottle contained only tea — an old movie trick. A third story is that as the fleet passed, she shouted "Down with the Democrats!" Roosevelt enjoyed Mrs. Peebles' antics, and as she stalked away waving an inverted U.S. flag he was reduced to howls of laughter.

On another occasion, the boats stopped a few hundred metres from the

local store, where I worked as one of the assistants. They sent somebody in a small boat to buy a certain type of fishing line. There was none in stock, but I had some in my tackle box. So I got into my canoe and raced out to the fleet, holding up the tackle box. Out came the big guns from all three boats. I called out, "Here is the fishing line that the president wants." The guards lowered their guns, aiming *at* my head instead of above it. So I just called out, "Here it is!" and threw the fishing line at them. I guess I was never closer to death. Maybe the skipper of the *Mizpah* told the guards that I was one of his friends.

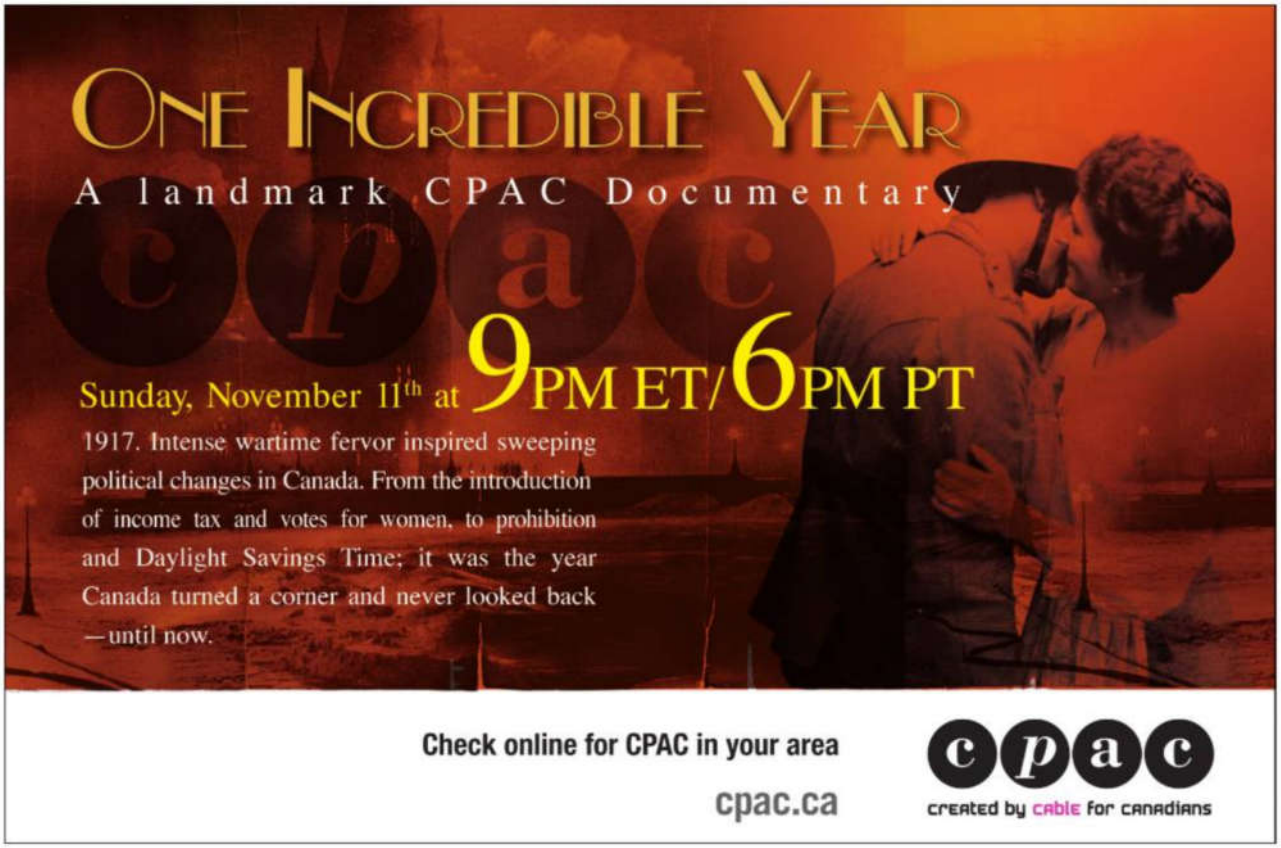
Despite all that effort, the fishing line was lost in the water.

Roosevelt's visit was a secret affair and it affected everyone in McGregor Bay. Nobody was allowed to leave while the president was there. There was no outgoing mail, telephone lines were closed down and even the sole local store could not order fresh supplies. Of course, the Second World War was raging, but security seemed overdone for this quiet cottage community. Stories of the guards' arrogance spread back to the United States over the following weeks and probably cost Roosevelt a few votes in the next election.

Roosevelt's visit also had a long-term environmental impact. In earlier times, if one wanted a pickerel or bass for dinner, one went out in an old punt, threw out a hand line, and was soon rewarded. That all changed after the summer of '43. The president raved about the fishing upon his return to the United States. This brought many wasteful fishermen to the area — even a commercial one, who put a net at the entrance to the bay the next spring, wiping out the entire spring run of pickerel. As time went on, more and more people came to McGregor Bay. The legal limit was six fish per day, but tourists would catch many more, keeping the best six and leaving a lot of dead fish to pollute the lake.

In the years following Roosevelt's visit, the population of the Bay tripled. Many of the new summer residents cared little about the environment and brought with them speedboats, personal watercraft, and other noisy conveyances, as well as the most expensive and efficient fishing gear on the market. Other factors contributed to these developments, but all in all, Roosevelt's fishing trip had a traumatic effect on this formerly quiet paradise.

Julia Tyrrell passed away in the summer of 2006, just shy of her ninety-third birthday. Her cousin, R.E. Munn, helped bring her story to our attention.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Great Depression photo courtesy of Library and Archives Canada.

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Founded in 1994 to popularize Canadian history, the work of Canada's National History Society includes **The Beaver, Kayak,** the **Governor General's Awards for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History** to honour the country's best history teachers, and the **Pierre Berton Award** to recognize those who have brought history to a wider audience.

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The Beaver was founded in 1920 by the Hudson's Bay Company, whose commitment to the History Society and its programs continues today through the ***Hudson's Bay Company History Foundation***.

THE DOMINION INSTITUTE

Students from Ratihen: Te High School in Kanesahtake, Quebec, submitted stories, as a class, for the 2006 Canadian Aboriginal Writing Challenge.

TELLING THEIR STORIES

The Canadian Aboriginal Youth Writing Challenge

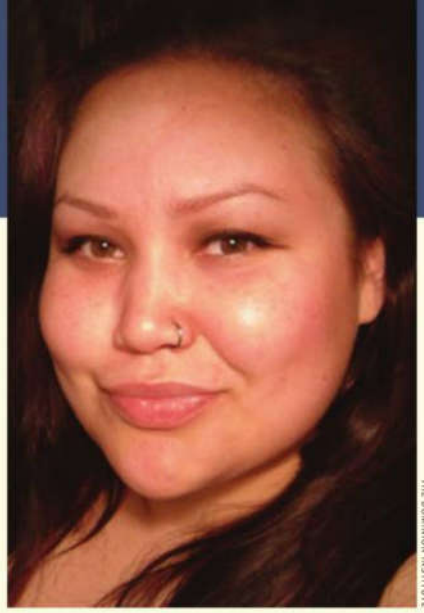
Once again, *The Beaver* is pleased to partner with the Dominion Institute in encouraging young aboriginal writers to write about Canadian history. The Canadian Aboriginal Youth Writing Challenge is sponsored by Enbridge Inc., the Royal Bank of Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, the National Literacy Secretariat and the Canada Council for the Arts. The challenge asks aboriginal students to write a story about a defining moment in Canadian aboriginal history. This year, there were 125 entries from across the country.

The winner of the fourteen- to eighteen-year-old-year-old age group is fifteen-year-old Chantelle Cheekinaw from Regina, whose winning story is "My Brother Lonnie." The winner of the nineteen- to twenty-nine-year-old-year-old category is twenty-seven-year-old Kerissa Dickie from Victoria. Kerissa's entry is called "Wild Flowers." The winners will read their stories at an awards presentation at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa on October 30.

The winning stories were selected by an advisory committee of aboriginal authors and leaders, including Chief Patrick Brazeau, Tantoo Cardinal, Tomson Highway, Lee Maracle, Brian Maracle, Rachel A. Qitsualik, Drew Hayden Taylor, Tresley Tourond, Marilyn Dumont and Mary Simon. The following are condensed versions of the winning entries, which were edited for length. To view the complete versions, go to our website at thebeaver.ca and follow the links.

Wild Flowers

by Kerissa Dickie



THE DOMINION INSTITUTE

Rose clutched the sack her mother had given her before boarding the bus and used it to block the cold wind from her throat. There was dry meat and bannock inside, and the canvas still held on to the bitter, musky smell of porcupine quills and moose hair.

Settled into a hard cot that night, Rose listened to other girls chatter in the darkness at the residential school. She listened to the wind wrestle with the large windows at the end of the room. She tried to stay still, and squeezed her thighs together. They had been ordered to urinate before bed, but the stalls and crowd of strangers in the bathroom had made her bladder lock up tight in self-consciousness.

Hours later, Rose awoke to the shrill sound of a bell and realized she had wet the bed. Instead of having breakfast, she was stripped naked in the shower room. Rose shook with cold — the water that fell from the ceiling was colder than any rain she had known.

It was a bitterly cold November afternoon, and Louis was waiting for his turn to play stick hockey on the ice rink in the boys' yard.

"Senándeh." A girl his age was sitting on the girls' side of the fence on the edge of a snowbank. Her hair was cut into a short bob, the style forced onto all girls at school, and her honey-brown cheeks were blotchy with cold. She turned her back to him and went back to fidgeting with something on the ground.

Louis leaned into the fence. "What you doing?"

"Get lost, you crazy bush Indian." She swatted in his direction.

Louis felt a giggle rise from his chest. "What's your name?"

"Rose. Why?"

"I'm Louis." Everything about her felt like a book being read. "You need help with something?"

Rose's face grew soft. "Could you teach me how to make fire?" She showed him a handful of broken twigs. "I'm trying, but nothing is happening."

"What do you need fire for?"

"If I'm going to make it all the way back home, I'll need fire to keep me warm."

"You're going home?"

"I tried to get into the storage room with all our stuff from home — you know, the coats and gloves they took from us — but it's locked. So it's even more important for me to learn how to make fire to keep warm."

"Well, I know how to make fire. I could teach you."

A smile shot across her face. She leaned forward. "Or you could just go with me."

Louis realized that he was close enough to smell her. It was the best smell in the world.

"Is your town very far?"

While a projector roared in the basement, illuminating a room full of rapt faces, Louis was layering socks stolen from the dirty laundry. He used his wool blanket as a sack, and he filled it with extra clothes, paper for kindling and crusted bread and beans that he saved from dinner. He walked softly down the stairs.

"Young man!" A high voice screeched, just as the lock on the front door's knob clicked open. The nun yanked hard on the back of his coat and it knocked the breath out of him.

The next day, during afternoon Mass, Sister Florence hurried to the front of the chapel. She whispered something to Father David, and his face blanched.

"Children, stay in your seats." Father David followed the nun out of the room.

Louis stood up and followed the sound of voices coming from upstairs. He sat near the top of the staircase. Father David and the sister were huddled by the front door, along with Mr. Galibois, the Indian agent.

"RCMP got the call two hours ago. A trucker saw her on the road, a few miles from here. Sent me to handle it," said Mr. Galibois. "Should I take her to the hospital in town?"

"There's nothing can be done now. You have to take her to her family. Bring her home."

Louis stared blankly at the bundle lying at their feet. He could see the side of her face. Her skin was pale, as if she had been rubbed just slightly with dust, and her lips were pursed shut.

Everything seemed to stop then.

A newborn whimpers and squirms in her tight papoose of hospital blanket. "Shhh. Momma's trying to sleep, Rose." Louis reaches for her in his sleeping wife's arms and draws her to his chest. Water runs across the smooth film of his eyes. He blinks, and tucks the blanket back around her arm.

He walks slowly to the window and looks out into the hot, July afternoon. Louis closes his eyes and imagines drifts of snow washing across the windowsill. A young girl appears through the haze of swirling snow. She swings a canvas sack, back and forth, and stops to smile at him. Her eyelashes and the hair framing her face are frozen into crystals. She motions for him to hurry. Then she is swallowed by a flurry of snow, and the frozen world outside begins to melt at the edges as his lids open.

"Rose," Louis looks into the newborn's face. "I promise to teach you everything I know."

My Brother Lonnie

by Chantelle Cheekinaw

While I was going to the powwow with my brother, my *kokum* (grandmother) and *moshum* (grandfather) and four of my brothers' friends, I got this feeling in my gut that something bad was going to happen.

As I was entering the dance floor, just as I was going to dance, I could hear my brother in the distance calling my name. He said, "Here, you stinker, here's that money I owe you," and gave me forty dollars to pay for a bet we'd made. Lonnie was twenty years old and I was fifteen. Lonnie always babied me and was so overprotective of me. He told me: "Go out there do your thing little sister. Make your ol' brother proud!!!"

As I danced on the floor in my jingle dress, I felt so free, so happy, and excited. I could feel my heart pounding along with the beating of the drums. I love that feeling so much. It's better than any other feeling in the world!

Then I heard a gunshot in the distance, where Lonnie was sitting, and I thought to myself, "Oh no! Lonnie!!" I rushed to the area where the shot came from and I held my brother in my arms. He coughed up blood and whispered, "Tessa I want you to do a favour for me.... I don't want you to end up like me, getting involved with gang shit and being involved with murders. Tessa, I know that you can do so much better than that, so don't do that kind of shit, OK. Make me proud, li'l sis!" He died just as the ambulance arrived.

Later that night I was lying in bed crying. Then, out of nowhere, I saw my brother at the end of my bed. I was really startled. Lonnie said: "Look Tessa, you can't be crying because I'm gone. I'm always by your side and watching over you! I'm in good hands now so you don't have to worry about me now, OK!"

I woke up out of my sleep, sweaty and confused, wondering if that was all just a dream. It was noon, so I went downstairs. Everything was quiet. My *moshum* went out hunting and my *kokum* was scrubbing my powwow outfit.

I saw a lot of sorrow and rage in my *kokum*'s eyes. I said to her "*kokum*, he's gone and he is in good hands now and someday we will all be reunited..." My *kokum* said: "Things will be so different without him here with us, but I guess it was the Creator's choice to take him back home. So we must move on with life."

My *moshum* got back from hunting. Just as he walked in, I ran up to him and gave him a big bear hug. And I said the same thing that I had told to my *kokum*.

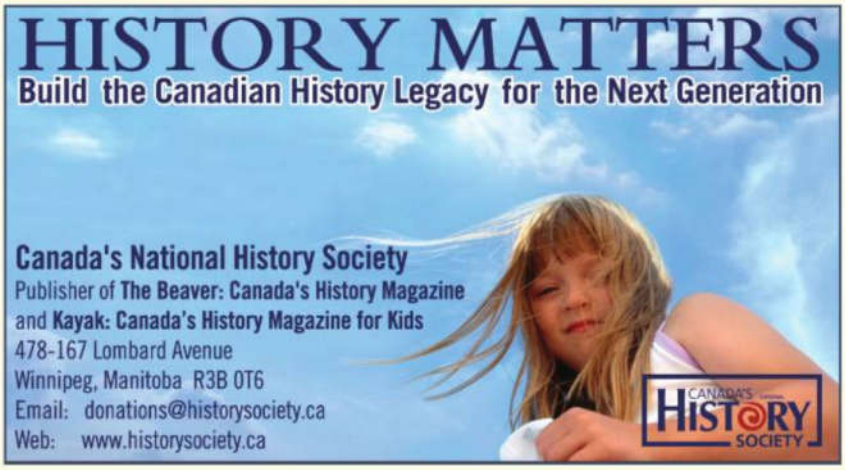
When I went to school on Monday, all I got was stares in the hallway. As people passed by me they would say "sorry to hear..." or "that's her — there she is." I hated it so much. I hate when people feel sorry for me.

My *moshum* drove us to the wake that day that was held at the band office on our reserve. When we entered the front doors all eyes were on me, and I felt like screaming at the top of my lungs, "what are you looking at?!" After the funeral, we just went home. Nobody really said anything to each other that day.

It is ten years later and I'm twenty-five. Two years ago, my *kokum* and *moshum* passed away. I have three beautiful children and a handsome husband. Yup, I'm married — to my high school sweetheart. I stopped powwow dancing (but) now I teach my daughters and my son to powwow dance.

I am finally at peace with myself. I might have lost all my family, my brother, my mother, and my grandparents, but things are OK now. I guess it is true what my *kokum* said, "Life goes on." By the way, I'm expecting my fourth child in June, the same birthday month as my brother Lonnie.

These stories were selected by a jury of the Dominion Institute's Canadian Aboriginal Writing Challenge and do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Beaver* or Canada's National History Society. They have not gone through *The Beaver*'s usual editorial process.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M 1786

John Molson

BREWING CANADA'S BEST

SINCE 1786

A Newsletter for Donors of Canada's National History Society

ADVANCING HISTORY

Geoff Molson stands in front of portraits of his ancestors, from the left: John Thomas Molson and William Molson.

CHRISTIAN FLEURY

A LEGACY OF GIVING

Molson Present's History Night in Canada

Supporting local communities through philanthropy comes as naturally to Geoff Molson as cracking open a beer and watching a hockey game. "My family has a long history of giving back to the community," Molson says, "both through the time and money we give to support community initiatives, and in providing economic benefit to the communities we operate in by sourcing our ingredients from local farmers."

Indeed, Geoff Molson, a seventh-generation member of one of Canada's oldest and most prominent industrial families, is an interesting choice as spokesperson for the Molson Foundation's recent $50,000 gift to Canada's National History Society. A young, energetic, forward-focused executive, Molson professes not to have the same devotion to heritage as his parents. However, it's clear that history, heritage and cultural identity are important to him. His office is peppered with memorabilia of past product launches and hockey events. He proudly points out a model boat belonging to an uncle that he's sequestered from the company's collection; one day it will be passed on to his eldest son.

The principle of "giving back" remains a key ingredient of the Molson family's philosophy of philanthropy, Molson says. However, the thirty-three-year-old vice-president of Molson Canada acknowledges having a different approach to community giving than, say, his parents.

"My parents are long-time *Beaver* subscribers, and they are the ones most interested in the preservation of heritage in local communities," he says. "I'm more interested in today's heritage — responding

ADVANCING HISTORY

Mr. and Mrs. John Molson

MCCORD MUSEUM/II-124749.0

to community needs now — so they can make history."

Molson moved back to Montreal in 2006 to take the position of vice-president after having spent close to 15 years studying, marrying, and working in the United States — including a five-year term at Molson-Coors in Colorado in the midst of the historic merger of the two companies.

He speaks passionately about the family business, proclaiming that Molson Canada is stronger because of the merger, and continues to be operated as a Canadian company guided by the very same values of quality, innovation, and commitment to communities first articulated by John Molson himself in 1786.

He also admits he was nervous about joining the company. "I felt more of the weight before I joined.... After I got there, I realized the company was filled with very proud employees... I realized it was a place I would want to be, even without all the family heritage and support that is also an important part for me."

During his time in the United States, he observed that Americans most commonly identify Canada for two things: beer and hockey. Since Molson's brand is intrinsically tied to both, being Canadian will always be an "essential" component to the corporate brand. That belief extends to the family's strategy for community investment.

The Molson family's long-time commitment to both Canada and Canadians has resulted in a vast array of gifts, large and small, to community organizations right across the country. In addition to their generous support of the History Society, The Molson family has contributed to the Boy Scouts of Canada, Musée du Fjord, World Wildlife Fund Canada, colleges and universities, hospitals and many other organizations. This legacy of support has resulted in three generations of the family being Order of Canada recipients, an honour in which all family members take much pride.

Geoff's mother is well-respected for her involvement with heritage preservation as a former trustee with Heritage Canada Foundation — something Geoff believes is an important component of the larger effort to promote history and heritage in Canada.

"Preservation was an important first step," he says, "but if you don't communicate about it, share it, or get people participating in the effort...." The consequences remain unspoken as he pauses to consider his ideas in the context of the work of the History Society. "Well, it's like *The Beaver*... if you'd just continued on, writing the same stories... you'd eventually have seen a decline. But because you are doing other things, finding new ways to communicate, to engage people, and maybe even be a bit controversial, you're remaining relevant."

The Molson Foundation, Molson Coors and the Molson family have contributed greatly to the history of our nation. For the compliment, and the much valued financial support, here's to you!

A History of Giving

Molson Canada donates $4.4 million a year to eligible charitable organizations and activities. A large part of their philanthropic investment is driven by their employees. In addition to an employee-matching charitable donation program, the Molson Volunteer program also provides every employee with one paid day per year for charitable activity.

With more than eight thousand employees, that adds up to the equivalent of 8.2 years of community service each year.

Molson's current community-investment program focuses its charitable giving in three areas: active living, healthy communities and skills development. Throughout its history, Molson has made significant contributions to heritage restoration, capital museum projects, as well as locally based events and activities in the field of history.

Some projects are one-time investments, as is the case with the current QEII Foundation restoration project. Others are ongoing.

Since the First World War, the company has also been an active supporter of Canada's military missions, providing knapsacks and Christmas packages for all our soldiers serving abroad.

Another long-standing involvement for Molson is its association with the Duke of Edinburgh Awards in Canada — a youth program that encourages the development of leadership skills and active citizenship.

KEEPING HISTORY ALIVE

The Hbc Local History Grant Program gives a big boost to community history projects.

Launched in the spring of 2007, the Hbc Local History Grant Program is helping history projects flourish across Canada. Hbc generously donated $50,000 for the program, with the History Society providing the coordination for the applications and evaluation of the proposals.

An outstanding success, grant requests poured in from across Canada, representing over 190 exciting and interesting projects.

One was the Grade 7 and 8 class from École Christ-Roi, in River Valley, Ontario. "My students have talked about the trip every day since," said Stacy Lafleche, the Grade 7/8 teacher who applied for the grant and organized the trip. The students visited Fort George and the Laura Secord Homestead.

Following is an excerpt from the letter we received from Ms. Lafleche.

Our grade 8 students celebrated their graduation on Wednesday June 20 and I must say that the highlight of all of their speeches was our trip to the Niagara Region. For most, it was one of the greatest experiences of their lives. We began our trip very early (4:30 a.m.) making our way to pick up our van rental in North Bay and set off for our Journey to southern Ontario.

We arrived in St. Catharines just after 10 a.m. From there we followed Lakeshore Road through vineyards and orchards to the magical town of Niagara on the Lake. The students were amazed at the town's beauty and preserved old-fashioned style. Our first visit was to Fort George, where Sir Isaac Brock resided during the Battle of 1812. Staff wore clothing of the war and really brought the era back to life through exciting demonstrations and activities of that period.

Arriving at the village of Queenston, we visited the Laura Secord Homestead, where my students learned that Laura Secord isn't just a box of chocolates. She was a Canadian hero who warned the British of the American invasion by walking more than 30 kilometres from Queenston to Decew Falls, near Merritville. We then got to walk the grounds where the battles took place at Queenston Heights and where Brock's monument majestically stands.

After dinner, we drove down the back roads from Niagara Falls to Merritville, where the relics of Captain John Decew's house still remain. This is the site that Laura Secord ran to in the middle of the night during the battle of 1812. They enjoyed the beautiful Decew Falls and ran in the trails of the forest. (Where they found their energy at this point is beyond me.)

As it was getting dark, we began heading to Welland, where Confederation Secondary School was to greet us for the night. We scared one another be telling ghost stories and just having lots of laughs. By midnight, silence and snores were all that could be heard.

The next morning, we headed to Port Dalhousie in the city of St. Catharines for breakfast at Mitzey's Diner, a quaint little diner where were greeted and fed generously. We then drove down to the port for a spectacular view of Lake Ontario.

CP PHOTOS

Laura Secord's living room in Niagara Falls.

My students have talked about the trip every day since. We are all so appreciative of the opportunity Hbc has awarded us. It is certainly a trip that brought us all closer together and will be forever remembered.

My students mean an awful lot to me and they deserved this experience.

SINCERELY,
STACY LAFLECHE
AND THE GRADES 7 AND 8 STUDENTS
ÉCOLE CHRIST-ROI, RIVER VALLEY, ONTARIO
CSCFN

It is exciting experiences like this that Canadians are making happen everyday. With a little help from Hbc, the History Society, and all of its supporters, we can continue to help Canadians celebrate their past in new and exciting ways.

THE 2007 SYMONS LECTURE ON THE STATE OF CANADIAN CONFEDERATION

SPEAKER:
THE HONOURABLE PETER LOUGHEED

Charlottetown Revisited, 1964, by Jean Paul Lemieux (1904-1990), oil on canvas, 197.2 x 380.4 cm. Commissioned with funds from Samuel and Saidye Bronfman, Montreal, 1964

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ADVANCING HISTORY

MAKING HISTORY

Todd Pennell, Manager of Development, recalls his family's story.

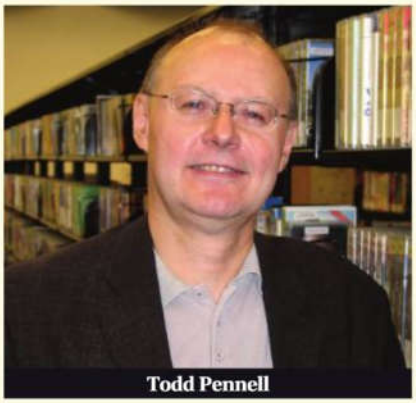
Todd joined the History Society team in early 2007. As Manager of Development, he is intimately involved with funding and outreach. He is a staunch believer in the importance of Canada's history, as evidenced by his own family story.

Six generations ago, my ancestors took a chance on a new land. The Pennell family arrived sometime in the 1800s, settling first in Ontario and later in Manitoba. My maternal ancestors from the clan MacLeod, meanwhile, were among the boatloads of Scottish settlers who came to Canada in 1817 seeking a better life.

My wife's family arrived much later. Coming from Ireland and Iceland, her grandparents lived in a soddie, struggling to turn Manitoba's rocky Interlake region into farmland. During the long prairie winter, her grandfather cut blocks of ice from Lake Manitoba, throwing them into a horse-drawn sled to take to Winnipeg to sell.

Imagine what the life of these pioneering men and women was like! We know bits and pieces about their triumphs, hardships, joys and sorrows through family stories. We also have copies of some of the correspondence with the federal government about their homesteads, and it is fascinating reading.

History is the name we give to these stories of our forefathers, and how communities and our country came to be. It's personal history, yes — yet when added together, it becomes the history of a nation.



Todd Pennell

Knowledge of history helps us understand the events — good and bad — that have helped shape our cities, provinces, country, and society. An understanding of Canadian history is essential to civic literacy, which in turn, is a cornerstone of our democratic federation. It is essential to who we are.

History is more than recounting battles won and lost. It is the story of everyday acts of courage and determination — and sometimes, bad judgment and cowardice. It is countless tales of life in a soddie or a teepee; of building a dry goods store or casting a fishing net; of tilling fields in search of the rich loam underneath.

Being part of the team at Canada's National History Society a privilege, because it enables me to learn more about our collective story. As the Manager of Development, my role is to ensure there is sufficient funding for the History Society to continue to tell these stories. It is a challenge that I accept with enthusiasm. I want my grandchildren to know where they come from. If we do not treasure our history, if we do not make the investment in preserving it, then the lessons of our families will be lost. And we will all be the poorer for it.

History matters. Please help us share and preserve it.

Coming in *The Beaver* December • January

The Way We Ate
Four centuries, four culinary eras. An exploration of Canada's food history.
BY FIONA LUCAS, HÉLÈNE-ANDRÉE BIZIER, DOROTHY DUNCAN, CINDA CHAVICH AND MARIE NIGHTINGALE

The Doctor and the Devastation
The Halifax Explosion sparked a medical emergency the likes of which Canadians had never before seen.
BY JOYCE GLASNER

Crinoline Cargo
At the height of the gold rush, British Columbia was beset with lonely bachelors. The answer? A shipload of potential brides from Britain.
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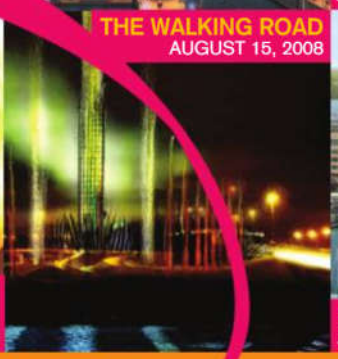

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REACHING OUT TO SCHOOLS WITH *KITS* AND *BITES*

Great West Life and the Department of Canadian Heritage help the History Society create new teaching resources.

The October issue of *BITE* will include the lesson plan When We Were Young: Making Documentaries, prepared by 2005 GG winners Jerry Berridge and Sheila Hetherington. Here, students interview a veteran for the project.

JERRY BERRIDGE AND SHEILA HETHERINGTON

For years, Canadian history teachers have talked about using *The Beaver*, and more recently *Kayak*, in their classrooms. Now, with the generous financial assistance of its partners Great West Life and the Department of Canadian Heritage, the History Society has launched an online initiative that provides teachers with the resources they need to make that as easy as possible.

Our two new newsletters, *BITE: Beaver Information for Teachers and Educators* and *KIT: Kayak Information for Teachers*, reach teachers across the country to help tell our national story. The newsletters celebrates the achievement of our best teachers and story tellers while sharing their experiences and wisdom.

The newsletters provide pertinent, curriculum-based lesson plans based on features in the magazines. In addition, teachers can download and print the articles for their classroom, click on links to helpful history websites, and get background information on selected topics from back issues of *The Beaver*.

Since their inception in the fall of 2006, the newsletters have featured the work of fifteen Governor General's Award-winning teachers, with more to come from our 2007 nominees. For example, 2002 award recipient Carol White created a lesson plan to accompany a feature in *Kayak* about the Christmas Truce in World War One.

Features and lesson plans often dovetail together. The lesson plan of 2006 GG nominee Kathryn Whitfield, about organizing and commanding troops in a mock World War One battle, was a natural fit with the April/May 2007 *Beaver* feature "Vimy Revisited." Likewise, Ken Marland's lesson plan about the disappearance of the Buffalo and appreciating natural resources was enhanced by our March/April 2007 feature in *Kayak* on the same subject.

Still working with the natural resources issue of *Kayak*, we were able to partner with Westglen Elementary School in Edmonton. After a lot of hard work and research, the students at Westglen helped produce an online exhibit about natural resources in Canada. Joint projects like this promote history and help students take pride in their work.

Reaching a network of more than two thousand teachers makes these types of projects possible. The response to the newsletter has been extremely positive and the benefits of a great teaching resource are already being realized.

In April, we partnered with the Fundamental Freedoms project to highlight their interactive website that explored the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. *KIT* and *BITE* are quickly becoming one-stop shops for up-to-date information about resources for history teachers.

The newsletters are creating a new national network to bring history teachers together. In the end, the biggest beneficiary will be students who have access to interesting and engaging projects.

GIVE THE PAST A FUTURE

Thank you for honouring Canada's National History Society through your financial support. All of Canada's National History Society programs are made possible through the generosity and commitment of people like you.

The History Society and its flagship magazine, *The Beaver*, have been sharing Canada's history with Canadians since October 1920. We are proud to say it is Canada's second-oldest magazine. Like most Canadian cultural producers, the History Society relies on donations to support publication of the magazine and our other education and recognition programs — subscriber revenues only provide a portion of the funds needed each year.

As a registered charity, the History Society accepts donations and issues receipts for income tax purposes. In return for your gift, we will include you in our annual Honour Roll list of supporters that appears in *The Beaver*.

There are many ways in which you can pledge your support:

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- a gift in honour of a friend, loved one, or history teacher;
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- a pledge for a multi-year gift that is amortized over a series of payments;
- a gift of securities or shares;
- leaving a legacy for future generations with a planned gift of insurance or in an estate;
- designating a gift to a specific program or activity of the History Society.

You can use the convenient pledge card found in this issue, visit our website (www.historysociety.ca), or call our development office at 1-800-816-6777 ext. 24 for more information.

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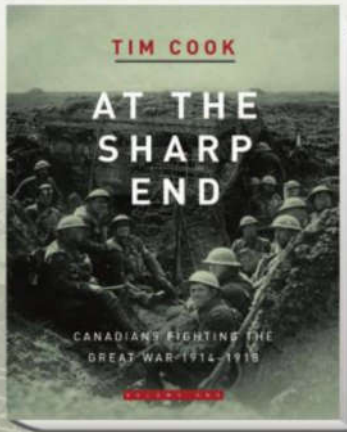

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Album

Virginia Mabel Beecroft is the daughter of Isabelle Sargeant. Her husband, Stephen Beecroft, submitted this photo from their home in Elliot Lake, Ontario.

A Family Wedding Dress

Silk, lace and history hang from the shoulders of Isabelle Sargeant. On a sunny day in 1930s Hamilton, Ontario, she stands in front of a blooming rose bush that climbs the side of her mother's house, modelling a treasured family heirloom. While backless evening gowns and slim-cut waists were fashions of the time, tradition trumped style in this family. The dress was originally made for Isabelle's great-grandmother, who wed in 1844, and shortly thereafter settled in Canada. The dress passed from her great-grandparents, Elizabeth Carey and John Cox, to their son, John Hedley Cox. John passed the coveted heirloom to his own daughter, Elizabeth Jane Cox, whose house Isabelle stands beside. A beautiful and treasured garment, it was undoubtedly brought out for special occasions. The neckline of the dress rests gently on the shoulders, with a low and pointed waist. Lace wraps around the elbows, as the pleated fabric forms a triangle from the shoulders to the waist in a style typical of the period.

Isabelle passed away last January, in her ninety-fifth year. She was the last of the children of John Arthur Harris and his wife, Elizabeth Jane Harris. The dress remains in her daughter's proud possession in Elliot Lake, Ontario.

Do you have an old photograph that captures a moment, important or ordinary, in Canada's history? If you would like to submit it for possible publication, have it copied (please don't send priceless originals) and mail it to Album, c/o *The Beaver*, 478–167 Lombard Ave., Winnipeg, MB, R3B 0T6. Or email your submission to album@thebeaver.ca. Include a brief description of the photo, including its date and location. If possible, identify people in the photograph and provide further information about the event or situation illustrated. To have your posted submission returned, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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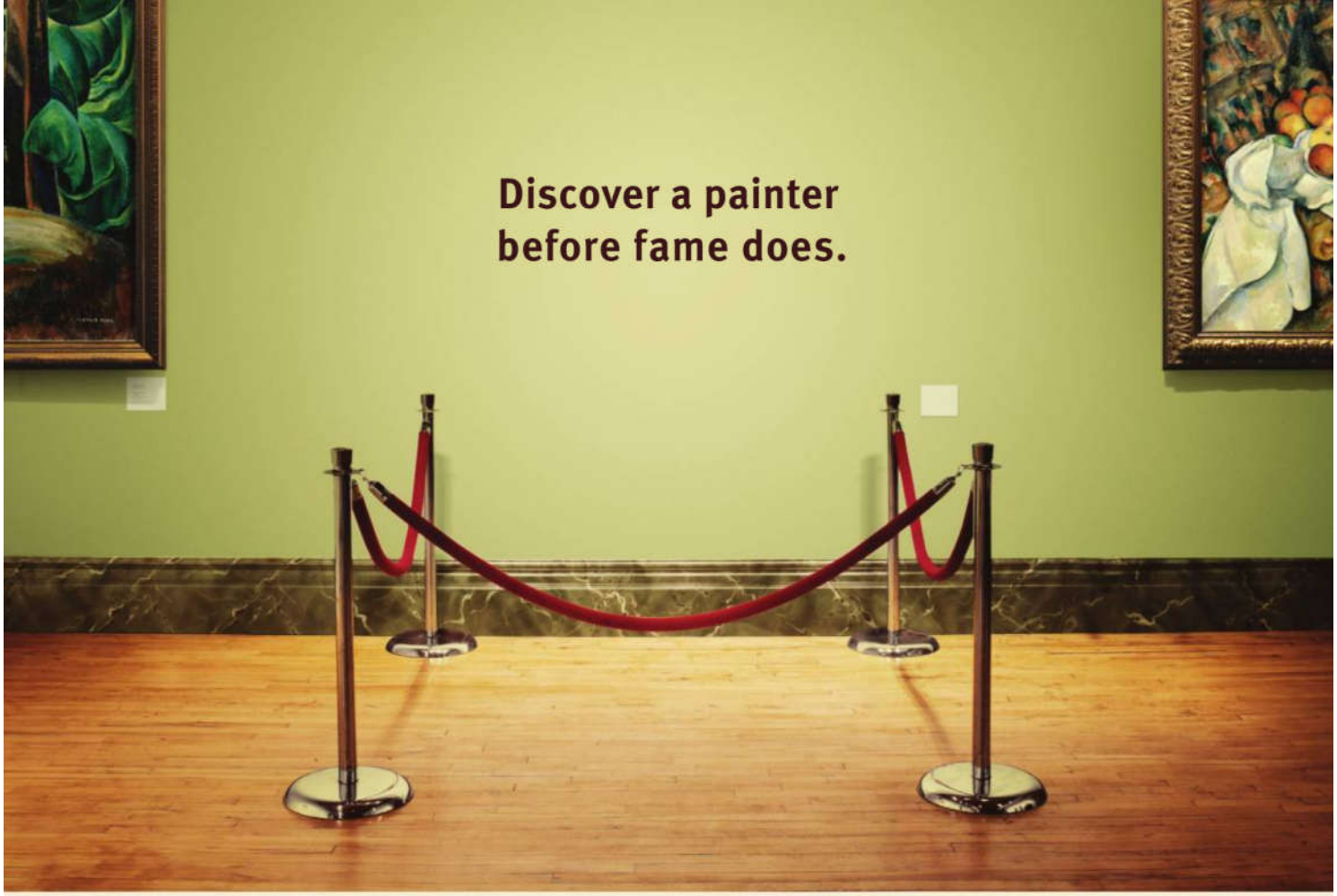

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Winnipeg	Oct 31–Nov 11	Winnipeg Art Gallery
Vancouver	Nov 24–Dec 1	Emily Carr Institute

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